

the house of prayer.



It is written, My house shall be called of all Nations the house of prayer. Mark. xi. 17.

A D V I C E
TO
R E A D E R S
O F T H E
Common Prayer-Book,
A N D T H E
P E O P L E
Attending the Same :

O F F E R E D

To the Consideration of those who
are for Promoting Decency in the
Service of G O D, according to
the Usage of the *Church of England*,
and as it is Establish'd by Law.

With a P R E F A C E of
Divine Worship in General.

By T. SEYMOR, Lay-man.

The Third Edition, Corrected.

L O N D O N,

Printed for S. C. and Sold by W. Keblewhite, at
the Swan in St. Paul's Church-yard, 1700.

A D V E

READERS

PEOPLE

to the Court's order of the 1st who
are for the 1st time in the
service of the 1st time in the

with a view to the 1st time in the

By T. S. 1st time in the

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TO THE
READER.

THERE is no Christian that prays
in the words which his Lord hath
taught him, but doth implicitly
profess his desire that these Papers
may be read and considered: For the first
thing he there prays for, is the hallowing
God's Name; which is, That God will give
his Grace to us, and all People, that we
may worship him as we ought to do, as our
Catechism hath taught us. Now the design of
this Book being only to give assistance to the
worshipping God as we ought, he that de-
sires the doing of that, must also the consider-
ing of this. For how meanly soever the thing
be done, it cannot but occasion some thoughts
in Mens minds, and some discourse, in Compa-
ny upon this Subject; whereby it is very prob-
able, many things which in the ordinary per-
formance have been amiss, may be observed and
amended, which would not have otherwise been
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thought on; and Men may be excited to consider what is fit to be done, that this Service may be most decently and solemnly performed. And if it do but this, I have my end. I do not impose my Dictates on any, but offer things to Consideration with all humility; acknowledging, that both my want of Learning, Time, Health, and due Composure, make me unfit to write for publick View: but my fervent desire to see things ordered in the best manner in this Service, which I have found so comfortable to my self, and desire may be more esteemed and frequented by others, hath perswaded this Essay; which I hope will offend none. If any should blame my boldness in meddling with those of the Ministry, my excuse must be, in the Observation of an Ingenious Gentleman, That even the Lamps of the Sanctuary may need Snuffers to make them burn the clearer. I know he saith, they ought to be of Gold; and I wish mine were better Metal: But I hope the purity of my Intention, will make amends for the meanness of my Style and Expression, and procure a kind Acceptance with that Sacred Tribe.

Upon occasion of this Second Edition, I must add this to the Reader: That I was forced in the first to cut off much of what I designed, that so I might accommodate the Book to what
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the Bookseller would venture to print : but he, now grown more bold by the good success of his first undertaking, gives me liberty to prosecute my first Intentions ; wherefore I here make some Inlargements ; and I have done it with good intentions, for the exciting a serious Devotion in these Holy Exercises of God's Worship, which by the prevalency of false Opinions, and vicious Practices, is greatly decayed ; and I have done it with full perswasion of mind, but without contempt of any that are otherwise affected. I pity all that will not make a through tryal of the Felicity of a Holy Life, and of this practice of Holiness which is according to the example of the ancientest and purest Times, and as purged from all Superstition and Fanaticism, (for such, I think is that I recommend.) And I am the more moved to this compassion, by the experience I have of the good success of this practice in my self. I was bred to the exercise of Piety in another Way, and endeavoured to be devout therein, as my Conscience told me I ought. I conversed with the wisest and best I lived with, and had some Intells among them to perswade me to a continuance in that Way ; but when it pleased God to bring in another Order, I thought it my Duty to consider well, before I sat down in a fixed Disobedience. I thought I could not express the honour I ow-

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ed to my Superiours, if I should refuse to consider what was said for Obedience to their Laws; nor yet the love I should have for Communion with all Christians, and especially those to whom I was united by manifold Obligations, if I should forsake it on Scruples easily resolved, or for the bare liking of some other Mode of Worship, as better than that they used. And upon an impartial consideration of what I have heard and read, (having never balked any Argument that I met with against the lawfulness of Lay-Nonconformity;) I am now satisfied that it is my Duty to obey the publick Order: and having endeavoured to do it with the Devotion I ought, I have found it no way inferiour (to speak the least) to what I was formerly used to, as to the uses and benefits of publick Worship, and especially to the exercise and entertainment of a heavenly Mind. This experience moved the Importunity used to Ministers and People in this Book, that they which Conform might do it so devoutly, as might be to the comfort of themselves, and attracting others to our Communion. And I have insinuated some Arguments to inforce the same, as so brief a Discourse would permit; which, with the former, I recommend unto God's Blessing, and a candid Interpretation; being resolved to make no more Additions thereunto, although it should have
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the good hap to be printed again. I hope they will not be angry with me, that have bought any of the first Edition, because I believe most of them are such, as Six-pence will not much concern; and it will be a good Work for them (if they have a mind to this Book) to give the former where they find any guilty of the Faults therein noted: and in this they will very much gratifie the Author of the Book, who desires nothing more in this World, than to see the excellent Order of our Church observed with that Care and Consideration (as well as with true Devotion) that it may have its true Beauty in the eyes of all good Men, and may also have a mighty efficacy to their Spiritual Joy and Consolation in this Holy and Heavenly Communion, and to the Reformation and Sanctification of their Minds and Lives.

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PREFACE

Concerning
DIVINE WORSHIP.

THE Worship of God is a thing
much talked of (and that with
great Reverence) by many who
have not (as I think) such Ap-
prehensions of it as they ought. And on the
other hand, of some it is as much slighted, as
if there were something of Fanaticism in all
Pretences to Devotion. My Design therefore
in this Preface shall be, to beget Right
Thoughts about it, and a Due Esteem
thereof; as I have in what follows endea-
voured to direct a Right Behaviour there-
in.

If Men would consider the thing, it would
not be difficult to understand what the true
Notion of Divine Worship is. Every Man
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knows what it is to give Worship in the common sence of that word, (viz.) That it is to signifie our Respects to Persons above us, by reverent actions suited unto their Dignity; And so it must principally signifie when it is applied unto God, The expression of the greatest Dread and Reverence towards his Glorious and Tremendous Deity by the most humble Postures of Adoration. This hath been the sence of all Mankind concerning this Matter, and this is the sence of the Holy Scriptures; and this all the Christian World agreed in, until the Corruptions and Cruelties of the Church of Rome, made those that justly opposed her in many things, to forsake others, without any other reason, but the hatred of being like to Her, who had been so cruel towards them. And among these, I reckon this to be the chief; That they not only left off the Daily Offices of God's Publick Worship, but also that Ancient Order for the performance thereof on the Lord's Day, which was most accommodat unto the conjunction of these Actions of Devotion and Adoration; by which means, bowing the Head, and Body, and Knees, &c. (which have in them the principal sence of that word Worship) have become almost quite out of use among them.

I cannot imagine, for my own part, any other reason why these solemn Actions should be-
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come so wholly disused; for I cannot believe that any who are acquainted with what is written of the former or present Customs of the World, can be ignorant what the usage thereof hath ever been, and still is, in worshipping whatever they called God: nor did I ever hear it proved, that their common sense did herein deceive them. It seems to me also, that it is impossible for any that read the Scripture, to be ignorant that when it speaks of any Person or Assembly that they worshipped the Lord, it means principally, they bowed their Heads before him in acknowledgement of his Deity, or in a sense of Gratitude for his Mercies; nor that these two words, Bowed and Worshipped, are almost every where in Scripture joyned together. And those that have read Ecclesiastical Histories, or conversed with any of other Churches (even those that never were of the Popish Communion) will find, that it is not the Papists only among Christians, that abound in these solemn Acts of Adoration; but that they ever were, and still are used by all Christians (and by some as much, if not more than by them) except only those whom I speak of, who have forsaken them on the account aforesaid.

Certainly there is some Reason upon which this common Consent is grounded, and for which this expression hath ever been made, by
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good Men of the Worship and Honour they desire to give to Almighty God, and hath ever been accepted and approved of him; and for the same reason it ought not to be forsaken and disused of us. And indeed, the very general Custom and Usage of the World, and of the Church, hath so much reason in it self, that it should be evidently proved there is positive Sin, or great Inconvenience in the things recommended thereby, before we venture to contradict or oppose them. We are commanded to give no Offence to the Jew, nor Greek, nor Church of God: whereas it seems to me, by forsaking these solemn Acts of Adoration we offend them all. And I verily believe, nothing more persuades the Papists of the Goodness of their own Religion, and makes them think ill of ours, than observing the Decency of these solemn Actions so frequently used in their public Service, and that it scarce looks like the Worship of God where they are wholly omitted, as they are in some Protestant Churches, and in all Nonconformists Meetings, and too much in our Parochial Assemblies also.

But it is not only the avoiding Offence that should recommend these solemn Actions, (and especially that of Bowing) but many great Reasons: 1. There is nothing more effectual to impress on the mind a sense of God's Presence, than this action of Bowing before him.

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him. It is impossible a Man can use such an Act, but he must think there is some One present to whom it is performed; and where Men have not a true belief of God's presence, and are conscious unto themselves of that defect, it will seem so unreasonable and foolish to perform such acts of Adoration, that they will be hardly persuaded thereunto. And for this reason, when the World became so carnaliz'd by indulging their brutish Part, that they could scarce have any apprehension of invisible Things but by the help of something that was the Object of their Senses, they invented Images to represent the invisible Powers they worshipped; and fancied that by their Incantations and Charms, their Gods were drawn to inhabit those Images; by which means they found they were helped in performing those Acts of Adoration to them. But the only living and true God hath utterly forbidden any such Representations of himself, as being a dishonour to the infinite Glory and Spirituality of his Nature, but yet requires External Worship from us, in acknowledgment that he is every-where present, but especially in the Assemblies that meet to do him honour and service: and that he, and he only, is to be feared, and had in reverence of all that are about him: and if we would perform this act of Adoration as we ought, we should find

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find great help thereby, against the weaknes of our Faith, and the dulness of our Spiritual Sence; and it would beget in us such an habitual apprehension of God's spiritual and invisible Presence, that it would be as a new nature or principle of spiritual and holy Life in all other things: I say, if we perform it as we ought; because I would have none think that I impute a Magical Force to this Action, as if all that do it, on what account soever, should become inspired with such an habitual sence of God and his universal Presence. For I know, that where this is in repute, Men may be very observant thereof for carnal ends; and be inwardly Atheistical, and outwardly prophane still: but if it be done with a design to signifie our belief of God's presence, and our awfull sence of his infinite Glory and Greatness, it hath tendency to work a habit of spiritual sensibility in this matter, and by the efficacie of the same we shall be continually kept in the fear of offending God, and excited to all holy and vertuous Actions that are pleasing to him: which I think is a very weighty matter.

Besides, it prepares and disposes our minds to the performance of all the Offices of Divine Worship, whereby we explicate the signification of such acts of Adoration: and therefore it hath been used to be done at our
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first coming into the Church, that we may remember what we are chiefly to intend in all we do there, viz. The Worship and Honour of Almighty God. The want of this consideration, is a cause of great mischiefs in the Church: Men have learnt to think, that all the Ministries of Religion are intended to work on their Affections and Passions, and to gratifie a Religious Fancy; and so they judge they are best ordered, when they serve most effectually to that end: and upon this account it is, that they condemn the Common Prayer as a dead Form, and cry up the Extempore Way, as the only acceptable Mode of serving God. And while they thus judge, they are subject to be drawn into Schism and Errour by every subtile Seducer that can handle the Instrument of his Tongue well, and affect their minds with some devout Passions. For so long as they think That Way of Religion best which most affects them, (Novelty having a great force in that matter, and Men that design to serve their Interests by making Disciples, being apt to bend their minds most strenuously to study to speak to Mens passions.) Men can never be fix'd in any way of Religion. But now if they were once perswaded that those publick Administrations are best, which serve most fitly to the Worship and Adoration of the Deity, and are most ad-
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vantageous for the conjunction of these solemn Actions which I here speak of; it would be hard for them to find any better than ours among those which separate from us.

For the better understanding the beginning of the foregoing Paragraph, wherein I say, That in the Offices of Divine Worship we explain the signification of the acts of Adoration, I must observe, 1. That, as the Worship we perform to God, by humbly bowing down in our approach to his glorious Majesty, doth declare our obligation unto all we perform in the following Offices; so those Offices do contain the explication of the Worship we thereby give to the Almighty. For since we declare by that action, that we worship him as the only true God, we oblige ourselves to perform that service which Deity makes his due: and this we do, when we give him thanks for the great benefits we have received at his hands, and set forth his most worthy praises, when we attend diligently to his holy Word, and seek at his hands things requisite and necessary for Body and Soul: for by these things we do acknowledge him to be the Fountain of our Being, and of all the benefits whereof we are Partakers, and to be the free and gracious Donor thereof; and that he is most worthy of all the Praise and Glory that we can give him, as by reason thereof, so also
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because of the infinite Perfections of his Nature, and his mighty and wonderful Works which we behold : That he is infinite Wisdom and Truth, and to be believed in all that he reveals to us : That he is our only supreme Law-giver, and to be obeyed in all that he commands us : That he is our Sovereign Lord, and our Weal or Wo doth wholly depend on his Favour or Displeasure ; and that no Arts or Labours of our own can secure us against Misery, or instate us in true Felicity, whether it be internal or external, present or future, but that our whole dependance is on his Favour and Blessing. And all this, and much more, is contained in our acknowledging him to be God ; which we do, by bowing down before him in the place of his Publick Worship.

2. Since the chief end of our Publick Service is the most explicate worshipping God, by acknowledging those things which Deity doth imply ; It is very meet that we joyn this act of Adoration with our Prayers and Praises, in fit places ; as, at the mention of God's glorious Titles and Attributes in the beginnings of the Collects ; and when we implore his gracious acceptance through the Merits of our blessed Saviour in the conclusion thereof : and there are also many places in the Te Deum, and in the other Hymns and Psalms, where

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where this action is very fit, both to express our sense of God's presence, our reverence towards him, our belief that he sees us, and that he hears all we speak to him; and also to keep our Devotion in life and strength, and to assist it in each other. I find in many places of Scripture, where the manner of the solemn approaches of the People unto God is described, that they did bow their heads and worship, in conjunction with their Praises and Prayers: And it seems to me, that there is such a natural Decency in the thing, that all unprejudiced Persons must approve it. Sure I am, that the devout behaviour of such as I have known to be truly pious Men in this kind, hath had a great influence on me; and I may think it will have the like on others.

3. That it seems to me, that the intention of Mind which is required to the speaking in any good Sense and Method in the Extempore way of Prayer; is a great hindrance to the due use of such acts of Worship in the Speaker, and that the necessary attention to what is spoken, and the inward discourse of Reason, whether it be fit for us to joyn with the Minister therein, is as great hindrance to such Devotion in the Hearers.

4. That the brief and comprehensive Prayers into which the general Office of Prayer in our Way is divided, seems much better in this respect,

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respect, than if the several matters whereof they consist were compased into one long continued Prayer.

5. That it would be very convenient that every one would keep to their own Parish Church, where they might have conveniencies to perform both this and other Expressions of Devotion, better than they can in a Crowd; into which many throng for lesser benefits than they might have by a devout performance of these Holy Offices.

This then I conceive (according to what I have said before) to be the Worship of God: When Men knowing and considering that there is one eternal infinite Being, of whose glories and tremendous Majesty, of incomprehensible Goodness, Wisdom, and Powers, and that he is present in all places: who, having made us with such powers and faculties as fit us for his Worship and Service, and enriched us with such benefits as give us greatest obligations thereunto, doth expect that we perform the same to the greatest advantage of his Glory and Honour. I say, when we knowing this, go unto the place of God's Publick Worship, and there do by actions worship God, bowing our Heads and Knees before him, and also by words, declaring our belief of his Being, Presence, Perfections, and wonderful Works, and our thankfulness for his infinite

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finite Mercies, and joy and delight in his Service; when we humbly and seriously attend to the solemn reading of his Divine Truth, the Histories of his mighty Works, to his Promises and Threatnings whereby he hath enforced his Laws, to the Prophecies and miraculous Gifts whereby he hath assured us the Doctrine is from himself, though by Ministry of Men; and such-like things, of great concernment to the glory of God, as well as our good, which we hear out of the Holy Scriptures: As also, when we make our Supplications and Prayers before him as our supreme Lord and Governor, and thereby acknowledge his Universal Presence and Providence extending to all Times, Places, and Persons, with all their circumstances, even in the minutest things, and withal over-ruling the greatest: And when in all these we intermix due Acts of Adoration, as continually intent on the consideration of God's Presence, and waiting for occasions, in the Offices of Praise, Hearing, and Prayers, to adore his Divine Majesty internally and externally, and to express our devout affections by such actions as bowing and lifting up our eyes and hands to Heaven, &c. and also kneeling and standing as it is most fitly ordered by the Church: And when every one at the conclusion of the Service using some short Ejaculation to beg God's pardon for what Defects

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feels we have been guilty of, and his acceptance of our sincere desire to honour him, humbly bowing before him at our leaving the Church; this I conceive hath very much Conformity to what all Men (that consider their natural apprehensions of things) will judge most like to that, which is the plain sense of Worshipping God.

'Tis some wonder to me, that many who seem to have a great Zeal for the Worship of God, and make every thing they do about Religion a part thereof (as the Church-Covenant, (which they add to that of Baptism) and the Suffrage of the People in the matter of the Ordination of Ministers, &c.) should be so inobservant of that Worship which Heathens have known by the Light of Nature to be due to God; and which all that ever worshipped a God (true or false) have used. Certainly the Law of Nature is God's most primitive Law, and cannot be altered while things remain the same; and all Divine Institutions in the matter of Worship, do but supply the Defects of that Law, and were Modes of Worship added (for special reasons) to that which Nature taught, but no way exclusive thereof, or contrary thereunto; and the Sacraments of the New Testament are instituted on the same account. Besides, I have observed in the Writings of the Non-conformists,

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formists, an acknowledgment of the Duty of Natural Worship, and of the use of such Natural Actions whereof it consists, but always this of Bowing (which is the chief) is left out of the Catalogue, and some hard Names, such as Cringing, Gesticulation, &c. put upon it to disgrace it; of which I never could find any reason, but their enmity to our Church, and their dislike of it in their own Way. 'Tis true, in one I find this, That Custom doth limit and determine Nature's Laws; upon which account, Prostration, and wearing Sack-cloth, and rending Garments, are now disused. And Bowing (since it is still left out) seems to be put among the number of those Natural Actions determined by Custom. But what Custom is this? Surely not the Custom of the Community of Mankind, nor of the Church of Christ, but of some that have almost banished all other Expressions of Devotion, but such which may be as proper to the hearing any Tragical Story, as to the Worship of God. But though Nature only teacheth the use of such Behaviour in worshipping God as is most expressive of our Reverence towards him, and Custom may make some variation of those Expressions; yet this Act of Bowing seems so naturally fit to express Reverence, and so decent, that it hath become Universally Customary, and is never like to be deter-

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determined by contrary Custom, or disparaged by hard Names, except amongst such as themselves.

I know that it is also said, that the Act of Parliament forbids the use of any other Ceremonies than what are mentioned in the Rubrick; and that this being not mentioned, it would be an act of Disobedience to use it. To which I answer, That the natural Expressions of Worship and Reverence to Almighty God cannot be there meant: for then, lifting up the Hands and Eyes to Heaven, may be thought forbidden as well as this; which I think none will affirm: But as God himself hath not instituted any thing positively, (no not in the time of the Law, when he was (as it were) the Temporal Monarch of the Jews) about his Natural Worship, (such as was performed in their Synagogues) so our Governours have not thought fit to institute any thing in this Case, but leave it to be done by every one as his Devotion moves him; but certainly they never intended to forbid it, as is here suggested.

It is also said by some, that it may make the Service of God seem ludicrous, by being done too much; and every one hath not discretion to do it as he ought, and will be apt to exceed; that the Papists are grown to such an extream in this action of Bowing, and such Gesti-

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relations about it, that their Service is
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of their Service; but I know that ma-
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readings in Divine Service, seem ridi-
culous to some that have been educated in a
Way. Besides, what the Papists are
to exceed in, is matter of Institution;
and place of their Bowing, Crossing,
being directed by their Rubrick (as I
said) but that which I speak of is a man-
ner of liberty, in which I never saw or heard
there was excess. That People left at
home should be too much in bowing their
heads and Knees in Adoration of him they
are in lifting up their Hands and Eyes
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Gesticulations about it, that their Service is ridiculous to Protestants, &c. To which I answer: As to the Papists, I can be no Judge in that matter, because I never saw the full Order of their Service; but I know that many esteem ill of things they are not used to, without just cause: the use of Musick and Artificial Singing, of Responses and Alternate Readings in Divine Service, seem ridiculous to some that have been educated in another Way. Besides, what the Papists are thought to exceed in, is matter of Institution; the time and place of their Bowing, Crossing, &c. being directed by their Rubrick (as I have read) but that which I speak of is a matter of Liberty, in which I never saw or heard that there was excess. That People left at liberty should be too much in bowing their Heads and Knees in Adoration of him they worship, in lifting up their Hands and Eyes to Heaven, in expression of their fervent affection in Prayer, &c. seems to me no way to be feared. 'Tis like some few (especially of the younger sort) that are much affected by observing the decency of this in some Ministers that practise it; being such, as by the holiness of their Life, and excellency of their Doctrine, have obtained a great reverence with them; I say, they may seem (and I think but seem) too zealous in this matter: but as
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the generality are far enough from that fault, and more like to be ashamed to do what their Consciences tell them is very decent, (especially when done by grave Men) than to exceed therein; so I think the fear of it should deter no Man from recommending a due and decent Performance, which is all this Paper aims at. But supposing this to be true, that Men do or may thus exceed, it seems an ill way of arguing, That because a thing may be over-done, therefore it should not be done at all. Some find fault with Extempore Prayers, that they are too long; and others, with ours in the Common Prayer, that they are too short: Should any Man now say, 'Tis best then to have no Prayers at all? yet 'tis as much reason in this case as the other. Men will never be of one mind in the measure of these things, while they are of different affection; the Formal will condemn the Devout of Excess, as they do them of Defect: but when Reason is consulted, all will agree that something of this kind is decent; and therefore methinks, after there hath been among us so long a total omission of this way of expressing Devotion, none should blame my Essay to recommend it. Though I have said thus much in favour of Bowing, which our Church leaves to every ones liberty, yet I would not be thought so confident in my Assertions herein, as to con-

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denn all that do not hold or practise as I do :
but I humbly offer this, as other things, to the
consideration of the Wise, being willing to re-
form any thing in my thoughts or actions that
I shall be convinced to be amiss. And do be-
lieve that those Church-men, who use not this
action, have better reason for it than I am a-
ware of ; or else on farther consideration, may
do as most Churches in the World, and most of
their Brethren have given them example.

I shall farther observe, as to this matter of
God's Worship, That God expects such
Worship from us, as is suitable to the Re-
velations he hath made of himself. It
was cause of his great displeasure against the
Gentile World, that when they knew him
to be God, they did not worship him as
God : when his eternal Power and God-
head (though invisible in itself) was made
evident by the Works of his Creation which
they had continually before their eyes, where-
by they might have learnt to worship him as
an infinite incorruptible Spirit, yet they would
worship him under the Resemblances of Cor-
ruptible Things ; which was a dishonour to
the Eternity and Omnipotency of his Divine
Nature.

But now our blessed Saviour hath farther
revealed the incomprehensible Deity, as sub-
sisting in a Trinity of Persons in the Unity of

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its Essence, and as manifested in our Flesh, in the second Person of that blessed Trinity: which revelation of God requires something peculiar in the matter of Divine Worship from us Christians. It hath been received as a matter of Faith by the Catholick Church, That the Trinity in Unity, and the Unity in Trinity is to be worshipped; and that our blessed Saviour, as God and Man, is to be honoured as we honour the Father. Now it seems to me, that there is such an excellent Order in our Liturgy for the performance of the Worship of God and our blessed Saviour according to these Evangelical Revelations, that 'tis scarce to be equalled in any other Way, especially that which is set up in competition with it. And I doubt not, all those that will impartially consider the Responses, the Te Deum, the Gloria Patri, (which we so frequently use, because it is suitable to this Gospel-Worship, (of which yet some complain there is great defect in our Liturgy) as also the Creed, the Letany, and the Communion-Service, and how God in these is honoured as Three Persons; and yet but one God; and our Saviour invoked and acknowledged as God-man advanced to the highest dignity at the right hand of God; I say, he that considers this, I hope, will think as I do. I know prejudice hinders Men from observing what is excel-

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excellent in any thing, but especially in such things they are not used to: but as I suppose none will deny that God is thus to be worshipped; so, where Men are not prejudiced, I verily believe they will think, that in no Way they can do it better.

There is something also to be inferred, as to this matter of God's Worship, from the plentiful effusion of the Spirit in Gospel-times, and our Fellowship and Communion in that Spirit. There are some Phrases in the New Testament, which, I think, have been perverted to a wrong sense, such as Praying in the Holy Ghost, Worshipping God in the Spirit, and in Spirit and Truth: which I think may better be referred to the worshipping God as revealed by the Gospel (which is called the Ministration of the Spirit) in the best forementioned; or else to our worshipping God in Faith and Fervency, in Unity and Unanimity, without distinction of Jew and Gentile; in spirituality, without legal Types and Figures, and carnal Ordinances; in the virtue of Christ's Merits, which was the truth of all the bloody Sacrifices of Atonement for acceptance with God in the legal Worship; and this, according to the Revelations whereof the Spirit of Christ is Author, and by whose Gifts and Powers they were confirmed: I think, better referred to these things, than to

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praying without study or a prepared Form, only by help of the Spirit.

It seems to me, that if those Expressions had any relation to praying by any extraordinary and supernatural assistance of God's Spirit, (as was their praying in Languages they had never learnt, or in Expressions that were above any attainments they could be supposed to have by ordinary means) it must be applicable only unto that time. For, however an Opinion hath been insinuated of late, of a miraculous and supernatural assistance for the performance of that Duty, which hath given confidence to many (who are naturally unable for the same) to venture on it, and that even in publick Administration, to the great dishonour of Religion, and just offence of all wise Men: yet I think none will dare to affirm, that any Christian or Minister hath any promise from God of such assistance of the Spirit, as may make it to be truly said, that he prays in the Spirit in the sence above-mentioned. But now praying in the Spirit, as I first interpreted it of praying as the Revelations of the Spirit of Christ in the Gospel requires, is applicable to all Times and Persons: and this I think to be done (as in the forementioned respect of worshipping the Trinity in Unity, and our Lord and Saviour as God-man, so also) when our Prayers are ordered for the greatest advantage

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advantage of Faith and Fervency, and of the Unity and Fellowship of the Spirit; and so I think ours are ordered.

For in the first place, our Faith is helped, by the assurance that we ask such things as are pleasing to God; and secondly, by the frequent mention of the merits of Christ: When we pray in the words which our Lord and Saviour himself hath taught us, and use such Forms as have been composed by Men famous in the Church, and approved by multitudes of Christians, and that for many Ages: when our Prayers are ordered with great advice of those that are most learned among our selves, (being also such as are orderly called to direct the publick Ministrations in Sacred Things) and when they are approved by all the Christians united into one National Church under one Civil Government, (which approbation is declared by the Representatives of both Clergy and Laity, with whose advice they are by Law established) and when we ourselves may consider and weigh the same before we use them, having them in our Books to read at any time; certainly we may on all these accounts be more assured that we pray for such things as we ought, than when we joyn in a Prayer we never heard before, and such as is the sudden conception of a private Minister, (as the use is with those that are against our

Way.)

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Way.) And finally, the frequent mention of the Merits of our Saviour at the conclusion of our brief Collects, is more helpful to our Belief that we shall find acceptance for Christ's sake, than when it is only once at the end of a long continued Prayer, if my own experience and that of wiser Men do not deceive me.

And secondly, for Fervency, we have great help also, having nothing to do but to apply our minds to earnestness in praising God and praying to him, no need of attending to hear what is spoken that we may judge whether it be fit for us to joyn in it or not: and when we know the Prayers before-hand, we can joy with the Minister and Congregation, though we hear not every word that is read. And the briefness of the Prayers, being composed of such weighty and comprehensive Expressions helps more to true Fervency than long Prayers; though the Novelty and Variety may more work on Mens fancies.

Then thirdly, the Unity and Fellowship of the Spirit is hereby assisted: I mean that Unity and Fellowship which that Spirit of God hath constituted by whom we are all baptized into one Body, and made to drink in to one Spirit, and so are obliged to all possible Concord and Agreement both external and internal: For first, We agree with the Saints of all Ages in this, That the publick Wor

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ship of God is to be administred by a prepared Form, and not by the present Conceptions of the Administrator: For I cannot understand that either the Jewish Church or the Christian did ever administer their publick Worship in any other way (except what those Persons did who were divinely inspired, as many were among the Jews, and in the first Ages of the Church, who therefore were said to Prophecy when they uttered such excellent Psalms or Prayers Extempore:) of which this is a sufficient demonstration to me, That in the Jewish Synagogues all things at this day are administred by Forms, and in all the Christian Churches (that have not been accounted Enthusiastical) the same Way was ever observed; or at least, none can deny that it now is so in all the Christian World, except those Congregations, united in some odd Opinions, that do separate from the Body of Christians; the only considerable Body of these, that ever admitted the other Way of Administration, being the Scots formerly, and the English in the late Distractions: but on many accounts that Admission cannot be esteemed an orderly Settlement, or excuse them from Schism, though it were by the prevailing Party. Now since it hath scarce ever been known, in Matters sacred, and of long custom, that great Alterations have been made, but with great Oppositions

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and Commotions; I conclude, that if, in the beginning of the Jewish Worship in their Synagogues, or of the Christian Worship in the publick Assemblies, Prayers had been ordinarily used to be made in the Extempore Way (except by inspired Persons, as before) that that Way could not have been altered so universally as it was, to the use of Forms, and yet we have no notice of the same either in History or by Tradition. But secondly, not only in that we use a Form, but in that we use such Forms wherein we have the most Communion with other Christians that is possible in the very words we speak; we use the Psalms of David, which as they have ever been a part of the Publick Worship of Jews, so also of Christians: we use also that excellent Form the Te Deum, which hath been used very anciently, and received of abundance of Churches into their publick Liturgy; so the three Creeds, and the Collects before the Epistles and Gospels; and the Gloria Patri, and most parts of our Service are made up of the most approved and generally received Forms of Prayer that could be found, with accommodation to the present time.

3dly, In the use of the Common Prayer, we have Communion most fully with the Christians to whom we are united under one Government (which we call the Church of England)

and

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and with all of that Congregation we presently joyn with in publick Worship: whereas in the other Way we have no certain Communion but only with the Minister, because we are not sure that any one in the Congregation approves of all he says, (nor it may be can we neither) and it is possible the Minister himself may speak that, for want of premeditation, which he, on second thoughts, may not approve himself. So that there cannot be so full Communion of the Spirit in that Way as in ours.

These things I have thought fit to hint, to beget a good Opinion in the minds of Men, of our established Order for the publick Worship of God. But I would not be thought to despise any that have a true love to God, and desire to honour and glorifie him in such a Way of Worship as they think most acceptable to him, what Mistakes soever Misinformation and Prejudices of Education and Converses may subject them unto. And I hope those that differ from me, will not reproach my fervent desire to promote Piety in the Way I best approve, and that which I am many ways obliged to chuse before any other. And if what I have written would perswade them to make a honest trial, (not by standing at gaze to see what we do, or sitting by as unconcerned in the Worship we offer to God by the Common-Prayer, while they only wait for the Preacher

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they desire to bear, but) by joyning heartily with us, according to the Advertis of this Paper; I do not doubt but they would soon leave wondering at my fervency in this Way. But if some should, through misguided Zeal, or for the Interests of their Party, fall foul on me for commending what they seek by all means to deprave, I am content to suffer as my Saviour did, while the Reproaches of those that reproach God (in condemning what by the Laws of Nature, and Examples in Scripture, he approves) fall upon me. And if those, that approve this Way of Worship, be made hereby the more fervent and devout in attending thereupon, I shall rejoyce in my Labours and Sufferings for their sakes. And I hope they will be so, when they consider, that in this Way, Devotion is not subject to be abused by the subtilty of ill Men (as it hath been by such on both sides that differ from us;) that here is no Discouragement given to the Weak and Bashful, (by exemplifying a Way of Devotion that is above their reach) nor any Temptation to the Bold and Self-conceited to aspire to things too high for them, to their own shame, and to the disturbance of the Church: That therein nothing but Principles of Truth (that tend to Piety, Charity, Obedience to Superiours, Meekness, Moderation, and Peaceableness among ourselves) are possible to be insinuated into our minds:

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minds : That hereby we shall be greatly assisted in Holy Meditations, (while our minds will be stored with abundance of excellent matter for the same) and in educating our Children religiously, in keeping our Families in Unity and Order, and performing the Worship belonging to the same; and the many other great benefits that we shall experience in a devout attendance on the daily Service of God in publick appointed by this Church; by which considerations they will also be more confirmed in their love hereunto, and excited to become examples to others, who will be more effectually drawn to their Duty, by observing the devout and frequent practice of this Way of Piety, than by Disputations about it. And it seems to me, that nothing is more like to preserve this Church against the designs of its Enemies on both hands, than such exemplary frequency of Attendance and fervency of true Devotion in those that profess themselves the Children thereof : The effecting of which is the Design of the ensuing Advice both to Readers and People.

While this Sheet was Printing, I was told by a Friend, that he heard the Learned Dr. Beveridge (in a Sermon on Titus 2. 12. March 26.) declare, That the import of the word *Worship*, was expressing Honour and Respect by bowing the

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the Head and Shoulders; and that this Action, as it had anciently been used in sacred Offices to signify our Adoration of Almighty God, so it is most fit and decent in the Exercises of Religion now. I was much pleased that the Judgment of so excellent a Person, publicly declared, just at the coming out of this Book, (which I am sure he had not the least knowledge or intimation of) gave countenance to my Undertaking in this Preface.

Since that, I hearing the said Doctor read Prayers at one of the *Lent-Sermons* at his Church, it seemed to me such a perfect Exemplification of what I advise in the Book, that I might seem to have learnt all from his practice (though I never heard him before). And I have great hope, that the Example of one so eminently Pious and Learned, of so excellent a Temper, and such unwearied Labours in the Ministry, may do more toward introducing Seriousness and Reverence in Divine Worship, than these Papers can do themselves: wherefore I have ventured (without his knowledge) to propose his Example in conjunction with my Endeavours; humbly begging his pardon, if he be offended to have his Name mentioned by so unworthy a Pen.

S O M E

SOME
CONSIDERATIONS

Offered to

Readers and People.

DIRECTIONS for READERS.

HE that will perform this Service as he ought, must first be prepared with true Devotion in his Mind and Spirit.

Two things are needful for the Explanation of this : First, *That the Expression of Devotion is a necessary Part of Worship.* Secondly, *That it will be difficult for the Reader to make such Expression, if he have not real Devotion in himself.*

For the first, I shall only observe, That it is the very Nature of Publick Worship, to be

be an outward Expression of such affections of our Souls as are due unto God alone; and such an Expression as is most unto his Honour, and our own and others Edification. This, I think, no Man will deny. And for that reason our Liturgy for this Worship is fitted to express a great humility and fervency in supplicating the Divine Majesty, as the Spring and Fountain of all our Comfort; and a great joy and exultancy in extolling his Greatness, and praising his Goodness, as the Perfection of our Felicity; and also to be accompanied with actions suitable thereunto. And he that reads the Prayers with a rambling Haſt, without ſuch due expreſſions of Devotion in the manner of his Speech and Actions, quite alters the nature of the thing, and ſpoils the deſign of it.

Every Man of any ſenſe, can diſcern the Indecency of reading ſuch words as [**Lord have mercy upon us, Chriſt have mercy upon us, Lord have mercy upon us,**] with ſuch a manner of ſpeaking as ſignifies but little Devotion and Fervency of Mind. And ſo they may alſo of ſaying the *Gloria Patri*, and *Te Deum*, &c. without ſuch cheerfulness of Speech, and reverent Acts of Adoration as become the ſame. Neither can we think, that we honour

nour God by any words we speak, if we do not appear fervent and devout in pronouncing the same: nor will it at all edifie ourselves or others. For words do not work here as Spells and Charms, but as rational Instruments that signifie the belief and affections of our Souls; which they cannot do, but by being so pronounced, and accompanied with fit actions as aforesaid. So that upon these reasons, the Reader is obliged to the expression of Devotion in his performance of this Service.

But besides, he that is careless in making such expression of Devotion in reading the Prayers, doth very much to prevent the Conversion of Infidels and Papists, to excuse the Nonconformity of all kind of Separatists, and to encourage the Prophane in their Neglect to attend these Sacred Offices.

To explain this, I must intreat the Reader to consider, That notwithstanding the Confusion of Tongues, there is one Universal Language understood by all Mankind, high and low, the ignorant as well as the learned: And those that know not the meaning of the words we speak, or can well perceive whether we speak Sense or Nonsense, yet by this can give account of what we say or do, as to the general
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tendency thereof. And this Language consists in the Tone of our Words, and Mode of our Actions; by these they know whether a Man means love or hatred, anger or good pleasure, honour or contempt, in common conversation: and so they may do also in the matter of Religion, they know by these, whether a Man, being in the Church, means the Adoration of a God, or a phantastick Observation of Persons or Things there present; whether he means *a natural delight* in exercising his Gifts and natural Powers, and in attending to the Musick of Words, Voices, or Instruments, (for there is no great difference, if no more be meant) or a *spiritual employment of his Mind upon God, and the things of Religion, as his chiefest Joy.*

And this kind of Language, (for so I here call it) as it is understood most generally, so it works most powerfully on the minds of Men, and disposeth them to believe what it expresseth, more than any Rhetorick of Words can do: And though these Expressions, as well as that of Words, requires some caution for the right understanding them, and may be abused by Hypocrites, to cheat and deceive the World; yet since, according to Mens understanding of them, (and till they are convinced

of

of the Hypocrisie) they do incline and affect their minds, Men are to account themselves concerned to make such expressions for their Conviction and Edification; and that the rather, because else the Souls of Men will be betrayed to those that lie in wait to deceive by such false Appearances. And it is not a thing arbitrary, and at Mens liberty, whether they will use these expressions or not: For since they are so significant of our Adoration of God, or fervency in our Prayers to him, and exultancy in his Praises; we must be obliged thereunto, by vertue of the Commands of worshipping God, of so praying and praising as is worthy of him; besides the many examples of this in Scripture. And indeed, the minds of Men are so apt to be inclined by these, that they will scarce believe we truly mean the Worship of God, except we express it by such signs. Now to apply this to the present purpose;

All Nations, according to that knowledge which naturally they have of this, have instituted and practised such Expressions of their Honour and Respect unto the God they worshipped; and the more the *Papists* have declined from the Substance of true Piety, the more they have endeavoured to keep up the reputation of it,

it, by outward Signs of Devotion; and all *Sects*, as they have formerly, so do they still make the Appearances of extraordinary Devotion, as means to introduce their Errours and Schisms. Now taking this for granted, That it is part of the Law written in the hearts of all Men, that whatever is acknowledged to be God is to be worshipped and adored; and that as the Name of God is great and dreadful, so his Worship should be awful and serious; and that they all understand, by the means fore-mentioned when it appears to be so: I say, on such premises we may conclude, That be our Religion never so good, neither *Papists* nor *Sectaries* will ever be inclined to consider it, nor brought to embrace it, while they perceive a Defect of these Expressions of Devotion in our most solemn Offices of Divine Worship, and whilst they think they out-do us in a matter they are so certain to be good and well-pleasing to God, and profitable to Men.

And I believe there can scarce be assigned a more probable Cause then this, of the great Averseness both of *Papists* and *Separatists* to joyn in our Common-Prayer: For both these have great Appearances of Devotion in their several Ways: The *Papists*, in their frequent Bowing, and other
acts

acts of Adoration; the *Fanatics*, in their seeming fervency and seriousness in Ex-temporary Prayers: And these latter (in whom we are most concerned) are necessitated to some kind of seriousness and intention; as that without which no Man can pray in that Way with any tolerable sense and method; and many, who with greatest intention and seriousness can scarce do either, are the more obliged to a greater fervency, at least in shew, in calling on the Name of God, with seeming earnestness; and to use his Titles and Attributes over and over, and all to cover the defects of their Invention: But this however looks like the Expression of a great Devotion, and is so understood by the unwary Multitude. If therefore they perceive no Expressions in our Way, that bear proportion to the same, It is impossible but they will prefer theirs before it; and hence they generally argue, That they are not bound to joyn in a Way of Worship that is worse, when they have opportunity to have Communion in a Way that is better. Now the main thing in which it is better in their opinion, is this, That they perceive in the Ministers of their way a great sense of God's invisible presence, and a great seriousness and fervency of mind in their Prayers

ers to him, which they cannot perceive in our Way, when the Prayers are read without such Expressions of Devotion, as I here affirm to be necessary.

And then it encourages the profaner sort in neglecting these holy Offices: For when they see the Readers of the Prayers so slight and superficial, and to express so little Seriousness and Devotion in Reading, they will never think themselves guilty of any great sin in being slight and careless in hearing, or very indevout if they never come to hear them at all. These things shew a necessity of expressing Devotion in Reading the Prayers. But,

Secondly, *This Men will very hardly do, if they have not the truth of it in their own Souls.* 'Tis true, Men may very easily discern by Natural Reason, the Decency of humouring words with a pronunciation suitable to the matter they contain, and of joyning therewith a fit and comely deportment of the Body; and they may know by common Observation, that as this is Praise-worthy, so it is of good Report among Men: And so it may be thought, that in compliance with their own Reason, and to gain Applause among Men, Readers may well enough compose themselves to counterfeit Devotion in performing the Of-

fice of Common-Prayers, and that, altho^{tho} they have none of the truth of it in themselves.

I confess, for my own part, I think a counterfeit Piety so much better for the Church than a profess'd Formality, that I wish the Prayers were devoutly read, on what account soever it be done. But when I consider how Errour hath weakened the respect that should be had to Devotion in the way of Common-Prayer, and observe the great slightness and general formality that is too common in hearing it, I am afraid that this will prevent *that consideration* in most Readers, and quite incivate the force of such Arguments; so that if Men have not a great Devotion in themselves, they are more like to be ashamed than inclined to counterfeit it: For when they see that Men generally think they have acquitted themselves very well in the Matters of God's Worship, if they do diligently attend to what the Minister prays and preaches in the Pulpit, though they little regard what the Readers do in the Desk, Readers will think it little concerns them to regard it neither; and so they are apt to hasten the Prayers out of the way, to make room for that which they see is chiefly intended, viz. the Sermon. But now

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if we may suppose a Reader to design this, we may find reason to think that it is much harder for any one in this case to perform the Man he is not, than in any other that can be named: for the sense of an Omniscient Being, who is especially present, and requires *truth in the inward parts*, abhorring all Hypocrisie and Dissimulation, and that more peculiarly in the Offices of his immediate Worship and Service; I say, the sense of this, will be apt to beget such a dread in their minds, as will hinder their attention to the right performance of a counterfeit Devotion. For certainly, as nothing is more helpful to the most decent expression of Devotion (where it truly is) than the lively sense of God's Presence; so nothing can be more apt to discompose the mind that designs not at all to express, but only to counterfeit Devotion, than this. Again, Mens defect of true Piety, oft betrays them to gross Vices, which not only impress a guilt on their minds, but also make them conscious, that all that know them will judge their seeming Devotion to be but a kind of Pageantry; and this will very much increase the difficulty of the thing. So that I think I may conclude, that he which would read the *Common-Prayer* well, ought to be prepared with true Devotion. But

But here I must insert a Caution, That I do not approve of them that make a scorn of the Appearances of Devotion in some Readers, because they are reported (it may be truly) to be often guilty of some gross Vice : For I believe, notwithstanding *that*, they may be sincere. *There is no Man that lives and sins not* : And there is a great deceitfulness in sin, and this deceit operates most on the persons where it most prevails ; and therefore I have often observed, (and so have wiser Men) that some persons whom all the Town have marked for covetous Men, would not believe themselves to be so : and so it is with spiteful, rageful, froward, and revengeful Persons, and many others. And it may be so with these.

And though Intemperance (the Vice oftenest insisted on) may seem to the Objectors (and many others not inclined thereunto) to be much a greater Vice than those fore-mentioned, yet it may not so seem to them that are guilty ; and also they may think that their ordinary measures, though greater than others, is no excess in them, and that their lapses into such measures as they cannot deny to be Excesses, and to disguise them (as all Vices in some kind do) may be but Infirmities, and, as such, be par-

pardoned by the mercies of the Gospel on
 the exercise of their daily Repentance :
 And though I think (as I said) that there
 is much of Cheat in this, yet while they
 believe their sins to be consistent with a
 state of Grace, and profess and practise a
 kind of Repentance, (though not such as
 will obtain their Pardon) I say, in such ca-
 ses I believe their expressions of Devotion
 may not be charged with Hypocrisie : For
 they may truly mean to adore, supplicate,
 and praise God ; and it may be the more
 truly, because they think he will not exact
 such Observances as they think themselves
 unable to perform. And I am afraid, that
 sort of Men who most complain of this
Reader, hold some Principles that give too
 much help to that vain Hope whereby such
 Men cheat themselves to their eternal ruin ;
 and while they blame others, Sin deceives,
 in this matter, even themselves. For it is
 a great cheat to think, that because Men
 do amiss in some things God will accept
 nothing that they do ; and as great, that
 Men may commend nothing in such : For,
 as it is evident, never any did any thing
 well for God, but it was accepted at his
 hands unto such purposes as were meet,
 and as tended to draw them farther and
 not discourage them. *Nebuchadnezzar, A-*
hab,

hab, Jebu, and many more, are instances of
 this : All wise Men, and some inspired
 ones, have commended whatever of Vertue
 or Plety they found in the worst of Men :
Paul, for instance, in the *Jews*. There-
 fore I conclude, though some *Readers* who
 perform this Service well, and make fit ex-
 pressions of Devotion in their outward Be-
 haviour ; I say, though they may be often
 guilty of Intemperance and other Vices,
 yet we cannot condemn them of Hypocri-
 sie, nor ought to discourage them in what
 they do well ; but our Duty is by all means
 to *admonish them daily*, and to convince
 them of the *deceitfulness of their sin*, that
 they be not *hardened* by it ; and perswade
 them of the necessity of universal Repen-
 tance and Obedience, as that without
 which God will never accept them into
 the embraces of his Fatherly Love, howe-
 ver he may forbear them some Temporal
 Judgments, and give them some Tempo-
 ral Blessings ; much less will he bring them
 to his Heavenly Kingdom : Nor can the
 true Children of God and his Church
 maintain such intimate Converses with
 them, nor shew such brotherly Kindness to
 them, as to sober Christians : Nor ought
 the Church to continue them in her Com-
 munion if they do not speedily reform and
 amend

amend their lives: But yet we may not decline their Ministration, nor make any Schism in or from a Church on their account, or condemn them of Hypocrisie in their expressions of Devotion.

But because I would not be thought hereby to excuse such Men, or give them any encouragement to presume, I intreat them to consider, that the Evangelical Precepts of *Perfection* are plain and cogent. The Grace vouchsafed is *mighty and powerful*; and to those that will fight manfully the Victory is certain; every one that seeks as he ought, shall find *a way of escape* out of every Temptation; *for God will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able*. If we will resist the Devil, he will flie from us; if we will walk in the Spirit, we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; for the Spirit that is in us, is stronger than he which is in the World, or than the most importunate lusts of the Flesh. Therefore it is only our willingness to yield, that makes us easie to be overcome: and he that thinks otherwise, dishonours the Grace of God, discourages vigorous Endeavours after the *Perfection* which is the mark we should aim at, puts the Conscience on the rack, or, as the Prophets's phrase is, *stays long in the place of breaking forth of children*, enjoying

ing no ease and content in his mind, and prevents himself of the highest Joy in the hope of eternal Life: Besides, he is an offence to his Brethren, tempts them to *forsake*, if not *abhor* God's Altar, and prove *Separatists* from the best Church in the World, and neglect their attendance on the most solemn and edifying Form of Divine Service; and many more mischiefs which are consequent unto an indulging themselves in Viciousness, especially that unmanly Vice I here treat of. Wherefore I earnestly beseech all *Readers* to break off all evil Customs of this kind, and to endeavour a perfect Temperance and Sobriety. I have been long on this Head, because I think it of greatest weight; I shall be brief on the rest.

3. Being prepared as before, he *must* endeavour to carry a sober Gravity in his Countenance, as becoming his sense of approaching the Divine Presence, in the most solemn Exercises of Holy Worship; and also the knowledge of his Office, that he is God's Embassador to his People, and their Spokesman to God, (for so is every *Reader* rightly Ordained, as well as the *Preacher*; and in reading the Scripture as a Minister of the Church, he speaks from God with the greatest Authority) he should therefore sup-

press in himself all timorousness and bashfulness, and carry a decent majesty and gravity in his Deportment and Countenance.

4. He must make those *ends* to which the several parts of this Service are designed, *to be his own* : He must endeavour by reading the *Sentences of Scripture*, and the solemn *Preface* at the beginning, to compose the minds of the People to great seriousness and true penitence. By reading the *Absolution*, to confirm their hopes of Mercy and Pardon (but without presumption.) By reading the *Prayers*, and repeating all parts, of Praise and Thanksgiving, and the *Responses* and mutual Provocations to Devotion, &c. he must earnestly intend not only the expression of his own holy affections, but to excite the like in others. There is a vast difference between the bare reading the *Prayers*, and this manner of speaking to God and Man thereby, making the words as if they were out own.

5. He must endeavour, by a clear Voice, and distinct Pronuntiation, to make himself understood of all, and by a treatable Speech to make it easie for the People to follow him, especially in those parts of Worship wherein they are to joyn their Voices :

Voices: But yet not so slow neither, that many should run before him in repeating the *Prayers* and the *Belief*, as People are apt to do ; which seems to me a very indecent thing, and an affront to the Ministerial Office, which is always to lead in the Publick Duties of *Religion*. And in repeating the *Psalms*, he should make such observation, that his Speech may bear proportion with the generality of the Congregation ; and that there be no pause between their ending one Verse and his beginning another, but that he come in with them at the last word ; which makes this Exercise more like *Psalmody*, the thing for which it is intended ; wherein the People do much want to be well instructed, for this would turn their Prejudices against this manner of reading the *Psalms* into a great Devotion, and make them have a great delight therein, as a thing which hath most of Heaven of any thing that is done here on Earth.

6. In the reading the *Solemn Prayers*, he must put on the greatest gravity, and outward expression of humblest Reverence and Devotion ; this being one principal part of Divine Worship, wherein we apply our selves most immediately to God himself, and make the nearest approaches

unto his Throne of Grace. And he must labour to excite the same expressions of Devotion in the People, (as by his own Example, so) by the affectionate pronunciation of these words appointed thereunto, **Let us pray** : than which nothing can be better ordered, to distinguish between the *Solemn Prayers* we offer up to God, and those we make in the way of *Psalmody*.

Especially in the repetition of the *Lord's Prayer* I earnestly recommend the most devout Reverence and Fervour : For we cannot but know, that as God hath greatest regard to that, as the Composure of his dear and only Son (his eternal Wisdom appearing in our Flesh) and as the *Catholick Church*, guided by the Divine Spirit hath ever had it in great veneration, (as the Instruction of her Lord and Saviour in the most principal part of her Duty, and the Declaration of her *Catholick Unity*) so every Minister of God and his Church should shew his great esteem thereof, by the most solemn and devout manner of repeating the same. Besides, in honour of the Author, and for the excellency of the matter, and the comprehensiveness of the words (as well as in conformity to God and his Church) this is required at their hands

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And I insist particularly on this, because I have observed, that many *Readers* having this Prayer more perfectly by heart than any of the rest, they ramble it over with a greater hast, and have less care to express that Devotion which becomes this Solemn Exercise, in reading that, than any other; the amendment whereof I humbly desire of them.

And because I have a great desire that this may be amended, I shall here adde somewhat to what was said before: I have observed so great a proneness in all, (even the most Grave and Devout) to say this Prayer faster than is meet, and without due expressions of their sence of the Majesty of God, who is *in Heaven*, though our Father in Christ Jesus; and of the great concern of those things most briefly expressed therein; that I have in my thoughts inquired a little into the cause thereof, which seems to me to be this: That this Prayer being the first thing that we teach Children in the Exercise of Religion, there is not that care taken to make them say it distinctly and reverently as ought to be, but they are suffered to do it with such Rambling hast, and without any regard of what they are about, that it begets an ill habit by long custom, which

is so strong, that all the powers of Reason can scarce overcome it; for else it were impossible but that those Men who are exceeding grave and intent in the Prayer they make themselves, should ramble at such a rate when they come to conclude with that our Lord and Master hath made for them; and that they who in all Offices of our Church, would have none to want that Prayer which is the sum and substance of all our Prayers, yet should have less of Gravity and Devotion in the repetition of that, than any of the rest. I cannot but impute this to an ill habit that almost all Men get in their Childhood, in this matter of saying the Lord's Prayer, and upon account hereof, I make it my earnest Request to Parents, and especially those of the Female Sex, (who have usually the charge of hearing their Children say their Prayers) that they will teach them, and often call upon them to say deliberately and distinctly what they speak in this Holy Office, but especially the **Lord's Prayer**: the want of this care causeth most Men, yea, Ministers, to have so ill a delivery, that it is very prejudicial to themselves and others, and a dishonour to the Holy Offices they perform, and a great hindrance to Edification, especially in

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Ministers. And 'tis this that would season their tender Years with a sence of God and Religion, which would never go out. Some Vessels never loose the savour of that which first of all is put into them, especially if it stand long; and if Children were first taught a right manner of performing their Devotions, and kept constantly to it while under the Tuition of their Mother, they would retain the effects of it through their whole lives. And we see by sad experience, the neglect of this not only is cause of the habitual Defect fore-mentioned, but betrays them to some ill Habits that make them a Grief to their Parents all their days. And I have hope, if Mothers were but conscious of their Duty herein, it would make them more wary of giving way to these frothy or froward humours, and that inordinate concern for little things, which indispose them for the same, and more willing to put on the Ornaments of the inward Man of the Heart, which inables them thereunto, by giving them that reverence and respect with their Children without which it can never be effected.

I hint this, 1. Because (as the welfare of Mankind depends very much on the good Education of Children, so) their

good Education will be most effectually begun in the well performance of this Duty; for in teaching them to say the **LORD'S PRAYER** devoutly, they will have occasion to discourse to them of the Glory and Presence of God, of the Awe and Reverence we must have for him; of his all-disposing Providence, and our Dependance on him, &c. which are the Principles of all Goodness; and also of the great Indearments of our Blessed Saviour, and of the excellency of his Person who taught this Prayer; whereby they will be disposed to true Christianity; and this foundation being laid, it will be easie to build them up in all Vertues.

2. Because I believe, that as Formality hath for the most part its beginning from the ill saying this Prayer, so it is most like to have its ending by our learning to say it aright; and he that can be devout as he ought in this, will be able to perform all acts of Devotion as becomes him. 'Tis the Opinion of wise Men, That Christ and his Church hath therefore thought better to teach us to pray, by prescribing us Forms, than by giving us a Directory for the Matter of Prayer, and leaving the Composure to ourselves, because no laborious Exercise of the Memory or Inven-

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tion should hinder the free and vigorous Exercise of Devotion; and that these Forms are usually brief, (except those for Fasts, which for a peculiar reason are longer) lest that vigilant and erect attention of mind, which in Prayer is very necessary, should be wasted or dulled through continuance if the Prayers were few and long. (as Mr. Hooker hath it out of St. *Augustine*.) Now when Men pervert these ends, and because they are not *necessitated* to be intent, by being put to study their Prayers just when they make them, or to remember what they studied before, therefore they will take no care to be intent at all, but say their Prayers as a Hireling doth his Work, as fast as they can, that they may be at leisure for that which they take more pleasure in. And because they have these brief Prayers very perfect, their Devotion is the more imperfect; this is a very unworthy requital of the Care of Christ and his Church: and how justly may such Persons be given up to *such Errors* as have drawn many into Fanaticism? as, 'That Forms of Prayer are the bane of 'Devotion: The **Lord's Prayer** is no 'Form: The way of Extempore Prayer is 'the only acceptable Service of God: And 'to pray by the Liturgy, or other Forms, 'is

' is unlawful ; and such-like.

Let me therefore once more intreat the care of Parents in this matter, that they will, first by their own Example, in saying this Prayer most distinctly, gravely, and devoutly, and in the most reverent posture in their Family-Worship, and then by Instruction suitable to the Capacities of their Children, and by the exercise of Parental Authority, bring them once to a good performance in saying this Divine Prayer by themselves, (which might be easily done if Men had a mind to it) and then bring them to Church with them, and make them joyn with the Congregation in that Prayer first and in a devout posture and with a distinct and audible voice, (and this they can be taught very young) and this will beget a desire in them to joyn in the rest, a diligence in learning to read, and a good pronounciation in all things : and this their concern to make their Children devout, would prevent another concern (which in the Church seems very indecent) and I mention it at the request of one who is much offended thereby, which is, a concern that their Childrens Hoods and Cloaths sit in the best manner, and be kept clean ; which makes them more busie about these things, even in the face of the
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Congregation, than about their Prayers: which I hope will seem to themselves so unfit, when they consider it, that a word will perswade them to reform it. But to return to my purpose.

7ly, He that *reads*, should not only observe to do it in such postures as the Church hath ordered, as standing or kneeling in the parts of Worship proper to each; but also with such natural actions, as lifting up the Eyes or Hands, &c. which the Church hath not ordered, and that because they are so obvious to the reason of all Mankind to be meet expressions of the inward Devotion of our minds, even such as are due to God by the very Law of Nature, that they need not be ordered: and they are indeed so natural, that it is scarce possible for a Man truly devout, to forbear the use of them. And it seems to me a thing wonderful, how Satan hath so blinded the minds of Men professing the best Religion in the World, that they do not more plainly perceive the Decency of such acts of Devotion, nor more generally practise them.

8ly, He ought also to make such fit Pauses where the People are to change their posture from kneeling to standing, that they may have time to rise up, and com-
pose

pose themselves for the acts of Adoration, especially before the repeating the words of *Glory* wherewith we begin the Office of Praise and Thanksgiving.

9ly, He ought also to give to each part of the Service the proper accent or measure of Voice belonging to the same: For it is not seemly that all should be read in one Tone; but those parts that are for *Instruction*, wherein he speaks to the People, should have one manner of reading; the *Prayers*, wherein he alone speaks for them, another; and those *Psalms* and *Prayers*, wherein they speak with him by turns, another. He that hath no understanding of this, nor doth observe it as it ought to be, can never read well.

10ly, It is also fit to give an Emphasis to some words in Reading, for the better expression and excitation of the devout affections which they may be supposed to require. But some *Readers* have accustomed themselves to a kind of devout Tone which puts an Emphasis on words where none is required; which plainly shews an affectation of Devotion where none is: Whereas nothing shews well in the Ministers of Religion, but that which appears to be natural, that is the true effect of a devout mind in themselves, and directed by sober judgement

ment to beget Devotion in others. But this, of all other, is most indecent in the repetition of the *Psalms* and all Alternate Readings, because the People can observe no Concord when they read thus as they may when it is read with an even Voice, and without such long Pauses as such kind of Tones are usually accompanied withal.

11ly, And it is very convenient, that in *Reading* those things that the People are least perfect in, the *Reader* should take most care to speak distinctly and audibly; which I have often observed they do not: The reason seems to be, because the care of *reading* right, what they are least used unto, takes off from the regard they should have to read so that they may all hear. The things I mean, are the *Collects* which are proper to several Days, the *Prayers* to be used on several Occasions, and the *Chapters* that are read out of the *Apocrypha*, &c.

12ly, Though it be a great advantage to this *devout manner of Reading*, to be so perfect, that he need not have a continual eye on his Book; yet until he be so, the *Reader* is not to venture on his memory alone: because mistakes are very indecent, and discompose the Auditory.

13ly, He

13ly, He ought also to make careful provision that all things be ready look'd out before-hand, that there be no cluttering of leaves in the midst of the Service.

And here I shall humbly offer to the consideration of the Governours of Choires in Cathedral Churches, the Reformation of a great Disorder, that I suppose proceeds from the neglect of something of this kind. I have observed myself, and heard many complain, (some out of Devotion, others in Reproach of our Service) that the Singing-boys are so rude and indecent in their Behaviour, that it makes that Service seem more like a carnal Divertisement, than the solemn Worship of Almighty G O D : The occasion whereof seems to me, to be the neglect of due care, that all the Singing-men and Boys know before-hand what is to be sung, and have it, every one, turned down ready in their Books: for the chief occasion of their talking to the Singing-men, and among themselves, is about this matter; and their being so used to talk in the midst of the Prayers, begets a profane Spirit in them, and is such an excuse for them, that they are ready to talk and laugh together, on other accounts, in the very face of the Bishops and the Masters of the Church: which

which hath given great Offence to many; and, I believe, the suffering this hath been one great cause of the Contempt of that Service among the common People, which makes the Reformation thereof the more needful. I was lately told of an Order in some *Lutheran* Churches, (whose Service consists chiefly in Singing the Psalms of *David* to the praise and glory of God; and Songs of Love and Honour to our blessed Saviour, composed by excellent Persons among themselves, for which Service they have Assemblies twice a day) and it is this: *That all may know what is to be sung, there is a Table bung up at the entrance of the Church, where it is written down what Psalms and Songs are appointed for the day; and the People (coming early to Church) go first to this place, and take notice what they are to sing, and look it out ready before the Service begins.* Such an Order in our Choirs would prevent the Indecency fore-mentioned, as also the Boys running up and down with Books to tell what Anthem is sung; which is also very indecent.

Neither is the care of Cleanness and Neatness both of Body and Garments to be neglected. The reason of the Judicial Laws for the Washings and curious Garments of the Priests, (*which was for the*
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beauty and glory of the Worship) they were to perform) seems to me to infer thus much at least, That those who administer Holy Things, should avoid all offensive Nattiness and Slovingliness, and appear before God and the Congregation as becomes the Ministers of the most Holy God, and of that Church which Christ designs to be *without spot or wrinkle*: and especially in administering those things which are more sacred and glorious.

The observation of the great proneness of *poor Readers* to neglect *this*, hath perswaded me of the convenient Institution of the *Surplice*, to teach them Cleanliness, and cover their defects therein; which yet will not prevail with many to keep Themselves clean, nor That neither.

Thus have I hinted such things as seem to make for the Solemnity and Efficacy of Divine Service; and the contrary whereunto, I have either observed myself, or heard others complain to be indecent: which I humbly offer to the consideration of those that are to read Publick Prayers. And I hope they will be moved the more to the exercise of a serious consideration in this matter, when they see the People do take notice what is decent and what indecent in
their

their performance, and concern themselves as much to have the Prayers well read, as to have excellent Sermons preached. And upon such consideration, they will find far better Rules to direct themselves, than my Pen hath offered.

And I might use some Arguments to perswade all Readers to attend unto such most serious consideration of this Advice; but I shall mention only this for a Conclusion: That every one of them did declare (at their Ordination) *their belief that they were inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take on them this Office and Ministry to serve God, for the promoting his glory, and edifying his People.* For their undertaking such an Office, for such ends, at the motion of the Holy Ghost, is the best Argument that can be imagined to perswade them to such a performance as may reach those ends which the Holy Ghost is so much concerned to promote; because they must apprehend it a dreadful thing to frustrate the design of that Almighty Spirit, (as much as in them lies) by their negligence and unfaithfulness, and a most happy and comfortable thing to co-operate with him by a right performance of that honourable Office to which he hath advanced them.

ADVICE

ADVICE to the PEOPLE.

HE that will perform this Service as he ought, must be duely prepar'd for the same. Now these Preparations are either Moral or Natural. The Moral are,

- I. That we rightly understand, and well consider what we go about; that we compose our Minds to such a frame as becomes *the Worship and Service of the most High God and of his Son Jesus Christ*; and so that we may perform it as *in the Fellowship and Communion of the Holy Ghost*. He that thinks of nothing else at his going to Church, but of hearing some celebrated Minister, one that hath a rare *Gift of Prayer*, or excellent *Method in Preaching*, where he shall have his Mind stirr'd up to good Thoughts, or his Fancy pleased with curious Notions, his Doubts resolved in hard points of Divinity, and himself assisted to defend his Opinions and Party against their Opponents, and such-like things: I say, he that hath only such thoughts at his going to Church, will never concern himself to be so serious and composed, and to put

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on such a heavenly frame of mind, as he that thinks *he is going to do the work of Angels* ; to adore and worship that Eternal Being that is enthron'd in the Heavens, and that Lamb of God who hath taken away the sins of the World, who is in the midst of that Throne ; To celebrate their Praises, to make our common Supplications to God through his Son ; and to witness our subjection to his Laws delivered by immediate inspiration of his blessed Spirit ; and to act and exercise the Graces of thy Spirit in holy Communion one with another.

And as this is evident from the nature of the thing, so is it apparent in the effects among Men. For while these of the latter sort have always been concerned to approach the House of God with great reverence, and at their coming thereinto to be uncovered, and to bow down and worship, and to fall on their knees at their coming to the place of their station, to implore God's gracious assistance in the performance of this solemn and sacred Service ; they of the former sort cry out of these things, that they are Idolatry, Will-Worship, and Superstition, &c. And tho' not one of a thousand of them know the original import of those words, nor scarce what themselves mean by them ; yet are they extream confident in their own way
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of slighthness and irreverence in approaching to Sacred Offices, (especially in Publick, where it is most indecent) and in reproaching us for what we do out of Conscience of our Duty, the reason whereof (as 'tis evident to me) is this; That they see no necessity of such Preparation for attendance on the Publick Worship, because, in their Way, they find themselves as apt to be affected, by the Passions and Rhetorick, by the Voice and Action of the Preacher, without such preparation, as with it; and think it sufficient to lift up their Hearts to God when so affected, but without any outward expressions of Reverence and Adoration, and that this is the only Worship God requires of them: and then indeed there were no great need of such a care to compose our minds for his Service. Therefore they think it needless, that we do the fore-mentioned actions, in our Way, to that purpose; and for that reason load the same with opprobrious names as before-mentioned. I confess I cannot but wonder (though I know some will be very angry with me for it) at the little Exceptions that are made against these things, which seem so very necessary and decent; and I hope, that (notwithstanding their great confidence)

dence) our opposites herein, on serious thoughts, may come to have a better Opinion thereof.

I intend no Disputation (for I pretend not to Learning) nor doth the thing require it: For every thing that is fit to be done, is not fit to be disputed; because that would suppose a difficulty where there is none. But I shall propound a few things to be considered, to bring Men to right thoughts in this matter.

1. That the belief of the invisible, *universal* Presence of the most glorious and only adorable Being, who hath made and doth govern all things, is one chief Foundation of all Religion.

2. That the belief of the *special* Presence of his Glory and Grace, where the Offices of his solemn Publick Worship is administered, is the chief reason of our meeting in Religious Assemblies for the performance of the same.

3. That the most express and intelligible acknowledgment of our present belief and sence of this his glorious and gracious Presence, is required of all the Members of such Assemblies, both by the nature of the thing, and by Divine Revelation:

4. That uncovering the Head, bowing the Body, and falling down on our Knees, doth

doth plainly signifie such acknowledgment, and that to the most dull and unlearned of Mankind; especially if they do but know *that we meet together to worship God*, as I observed before.

5. That because it may not be possible for them to mistake the meaning of our Bowing, (that action which is the chief cause of offence) our Custom is when we bow down (especially when it is without words accompanying it) and worship, to do it towards the place where the Holy Table is. Now every Man that will but enter into any consideration of this matter, must necessarily perceive, that, in such circumstance, if that action be done at all in the place of Publick Worship, it cannot be fitly done any other way. For Quires, where it is most customary, (especially those I have seen) have one entrance at the end, against the Communion-Table, and two others on the sides, over against each other. Now if a Man at his entrance at the former, should think it better to face quite about, and bow towards the Door he came in at, than to bow right-forward toward the Table, I believe he would make himself ridiculous to all the People; because it it could not signifie *Worship at his approach to God*; And so it would be on the same

account, if he prefer bowing towards the People sitting on either side. Again, if two making their entrance at the Doors on either side, should chuse to bow strait before them, rather than to turn towards the Altar, none can think it would look like an act of Divine Worship, but it would seem like their passing a Complement to each other? And if it should be done the other way, there would be a greater likeness of civil respect to the Company, than of Religious Worship. And something of like nature would be found in bowing in any way whatever but that in use; and that, however the entrance into, or scituation of Quires be, or of any other places of Worship should be. So that the only matters to be disputed are, whether it be lawful and fit, when we first come into the place, purposely appointed and presently to be used, for the most solemn Exercises of Divine Worship; I say, whether it be lawful for us then and there to make publick acknowledgment that we are sensible we are come to appear in the special presence of God, and that, to give him the utmost Worship and Honour we are able. 2dly, Whether we do not make a fit expression of this by humbly bowing ourselves before him at our coming into the Church?

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3dly,

3dly, Whether it be not best that all do in
 one way, since all come thither to the same
 end? And finally, Whether not all that
 way where there is something in the very
 place that may help to mind us of God's
 condescension to be so graciously present
 but where is nothing that may so much
 seem to be the Object of our Respect sig-
 nified thereby but God's invisible presence
 only? And these are things that seem
 to me to need no Disputation, as I said
 first.

I know 'tis easie to multiply words on
 this Subject; but my intended Brevity per-
 mits no more. Therefore I return to what
 I first began withal, to remember those
 who write to, That it is their Duty so to man-
 age all their secular concerns and world-
 ly business, that they may never be habitu-
 ally unprepar'd for these sacred Offices (as
 all are, that live a carnal and unrighteous
 life;) and that they ought, at the time
 when they are presently to approach the
 special presence, of that Almighty God
 whose Name is great and dreadful, and
 who will be sanctified by all those that
 approach unto Him in the acts of his
 solemn Worship; I say, then especially, they
 ought actually to prepare themselves by
 voluntary composition of their Minds;

also by the most serious consideration of the glorious Greatness and aimable Goodness of that God they are going to Worship, and of his special Presence in Holy Assemblies; and by such Consideration and Prayer stirring up in themselves an earnest desire to express their own, and excite the Devotion of others, to the Honour of Almighty God, and our Blessed Saviour Jesus Christ. And I shall add this, That as they go into the Church it will be very profitable to think on such sentences of Scriptures as these following: *Oh how dreadful is this place! this is no other but the house of God, this is the gate of heaven. Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, the place where thine honour dwelleth. Oh how amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! my soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord, my heart and my flesh thirsteth for the living God. I will go unto thy house in the multitude of thy mercies, in thy fear will I worship towards thy holy Temple. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they shall be always praising thee. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and his fatness, whilst my mouth praiseth with joyfulness, thy lips. One day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents*

of wickedness. Such Meditations will dispose us to that Reverence and holy Joy in God, as is meet to accompany us in the performance of this Service, which holy affections, as we express by humbly bowing at our first coming into the Church, so by falling on our knees at the place of our station, secretly to implore God's acceptance of and assistance in the service we are to perform to him.

And this they are taught by the best of Preachers, in his *Ecclesiast.* Chap. 5. v. 1. *Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God; and be more ready to hear, than to offer the sacrifice of fools.* Which place I the rather mention, because I have heard it perverted to a contrary sense, against this very thing; as if Men ought hastily to run into the Church, and immediately fix themselves to attend to the Prayer or Sermon, and if we thus fall on our Knees to worship, and to beg God's gracious acceptance of our Service, and his assistance to perform it as we ought, this they think is but the *Sacrifice of Fools*. In answer to which I observe, that these things must be inferred from the words that they may serve to condemn our practice.

1. That the only or chief part of God's Worship was, in *Solomon's* time, as it

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with them, *Hearing of Sermons*; - (when indeed we have scarce any notice that in the *Temple* (the House of God in the highest sence) there was any Sermons at all.)

2. That this Custom which they condemn, was more antient than these Proverbs, as it must be if this was intended to reprove it (which it may be they would grant a mistake, (as being too much for its credit) if the whole strength of their Plea from the Text consisted not therein.)

3. That this was the *only or chief* thing to which the name of *Sacrifice* was then appropriate, for which reason *Solomon* calls it *Sacrifice* by way of Eminency: which I dare say they do not believe, (if ever it were called so at all.)

4. But, if that were meant by *Sacrifices*, we must be sure that it was the matter of action, and not the ill-manners of performance, that (in *Solomon's* sence) did denominate it the *Sacrifice of Fools*. For we know there were such things, as are in the most primitive and proper sence *Sacrifices*, and that of God's own appointment, which yet by ill circumstances might be made the *Sacrifices of Fools*. - If any of these be a mistake, as I believe they all are,

no proof of any ill in this Custom can result from this Scripture.

But it is not more certain that an ill humour in the Eye gives its own tincture to all Objects presented to it, than it is, that false Opinions being once fixed in the Mind, make Men think, Scriptures to sound the praise of their own Way, and the reproach of others. But if I might give my Opinion of the Instruction which this Scripture affords, it should be this: "That
 "as the *Jews* of old were not to think it
 "enough that they went to the Temple
 "and did their Sacrifices as was required,
 "(as to the matter of them) but ought diligently to attend to a due preparation
 "and the right manner of performance,
 "without which they would be accounted, in the sight of God, but *the Sacrifices of Fools*, wherein God hath no pleasure; So Christians now ought to take
 "the same care, lest their slight and irreverent approach to the House of God,
 "or any indecencies or disorders in what they do there, may render their Evangelical Sacrifices unpleasant unto God. These *Sacrifices* are those of ourselves, and especially of *our Bodies*: for by words and actions we do the same thing that was done by the legal Sacrifices; I mean in this

respect,

respect, that they were *Ordinances of Divine Worship*; That Worship was by *Types and Figures* for the time then present, (as was the place where they were offered) *ordained by a positive Law*; This the Natural and Eternal Worship, founded in the unchangeable rules of Reason, and therefore called our *Reasonable Service*: this *Service* we perform when our Bodies are employed in the forementioned acts of Adoration, in speaking in Prayer and Praise, and in hearing the Word of God read or preached. But it is not these bodily Exercises and external Appearances (being alone) that can profit ourselves, however they may in some respects honour God, and edifie others: Because the good they do to others is by accident, and not of design; and therefore can no more profit us as to our acceptance with God, or to the increase of Piety in ourselves, than what was there called the *Sacrifices of Fools* did profit them. And they may be called foolish Sacrifices, both because not done from a right Principle, nor to a right End, in which things true Wisdom much more consists than in the best outward performance if it be but in Masquerade, and for ill or mean purposes: But then they are much more foolish if *undue-*

ly done, (*i. e.*) in a slight and irreverent manner; in which they will be very subject to do them that are not so dispos'd as before is advised: Therefore we ought diligently to attend to the preparing ourselves, both by the sobriety of our general Conversation and by our pious Resolutions before-hand; and also by putting on such holy affections at the present time, as may animate our Devotions, and direct them to a right end; and then continuing our care all the time of Divine Service, that we be not diverted nor discomposed, either by our own vain thoughts, or by outward Objects; but that the performance may be according to our preparations. And this is the thing to which I admonish, as our moral preparation for this Service. And I must add one thing, (omitted before) *viz.* That it is very helpful to such composure for this Service, That all persons do endeavour to be at Church before the Prayers begin, that they may more sedately approach the Divine Presence, and perform the Reverence due to the most high God; and, without any disturbance to themselves or the Congregation, take their place in the Church; and compose themselves by Prayer and Meditation for these holy Duties, as before. Certainly, it is a great advantage to a right per-

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performance, that we do this: for when we come, suddenly and hastily, from our worldly Businesſes, to ſacred Offices, it is hard to compoſe ourſelves as we ought, and ſo, as to do them well; but being at Church before hand, where we are retired from the World, and are helped, by the Magnificence and Beauty of the place, and by our cuſtom of worſhipping God there, to think of his glorious Preſence, and fix our minds on him by ſerious Meditations of his Attributes, Words, and Word, &c. I ſay, this is a mighty help to a right performance: Then we may with more freedom make our private Prayer to God for his gracious acceptance and aſſiſtance; and thoſe who are offended when we do it in miſt of the Service, can find no fault with us for doing it before it begin: And we ſhall alſo prevent, as much as may be, the diſturb- ing the Congregation by clattering of Pews, and by diſordering others to get to our places, and calling the Sexton from ſerving God to wait on us to open our Pew: And indeed, I have thought that ſort of Men very unhappy in this, that they can have little time and compoſure to attend this Holy Office upon that very account; which every one ſhould prevent as far as they can; conſidering they have ſouls to ſave as

well as we. But yet let not this, nor any thing else, so prevent those who are necessarily hindred from coming early, that they come not at all; it is better to come but to the Blessing, than wholly to forbear; God accepts the will for the deed, when we can do no more, (and so he doth a part for the whole) and by declaring our willingness to do what we can, we keep up a reverence for the Prayers, and gain our selves a share with the rest of the Congregation in all the Blessings sought therein.

There is one thing that I would advise, as a help to this our coming early, which is, that a certain time be fixed by the Minister for the beginning of Prayers, for then every one can the better order his business, and watch the time that he may be ready; and where it is so, I know that Men of great business may find a time to attend the daily Prayers: I have some Examples near me that I can scarce forbear to name, but without leave I dare not. And I wish withal my heart that while Prayers are read daily in some places in this City, the Parishes where they are would take care for a Bell of a clear sound, and advantageously hung, and would also cause it to be rung some considerable time before they

they begin, which will be very helpful in this case : and this would prevent an Abuse which I have observed in most Churches that have Prayers twice a day, (*viz.*) that the Sextons are so careless and negligent, that the Church-doors are not so much as opened when the Clock strikes the hour appointed for Prayers, so that many that, out of Devotion, or by reason of the difference of Clocks, come a little too soon are fain to wait a great while, at the Church-door for entrance.

Secondly, The natural Preparations are, An ability to read distinctly that which we are to read, and also to say perfectly by heart the daily Psalms and Hymns ; that so we may perform our part with the better grace.

'Tis certainly a thing most evident to any that will consider it, that what is to be done in the sight and presence of Almighty God, and especially when it is to be done, most immediately, for his Glory and Honour, I say that it should be done in the most excellent manner that is possible ; and therefore it will need no proof, to those that believe what I have already written on that Subjects, that this which I advise is a great and most concerning Duty. And I the rather insist on it, because I have observed that many who profess

selfs to be great Approvers of the Common-Prayer, and of all the Orders of our Church, do yet seldom or never read their part of the *Psalms*, or joyn in the Repetition of the *daily Hymns and Responses*, as they are ordered: which I impute to their great carelesness in those preparations: and that many who do what is required to be done, yet do it so ill, that it is apparent they want some excitation to their Duty hereabout.

I shall therefore intreat all that are defective herein, to employ their leisure hours to practise a more perfect and punctual way of Reading; which will be a thing of credit and use to them, otherwise as well as here. I have sometimes been present, when Men of good Quality and Estates have taken upon them to read some Pamphlet in a Coffee-house; but read at such a pitiful rate, that a Man could scarce make sence of it, or be ever the wiser for hearing it: which is a reproach to them among wise Men; for whatever the defects of their Education have been, it might easily have been supplied by their own diligence, if an inordinate love of Company and other Divertisements did not make them, too much, to decline profitable Retirements.

And

And I would intreat all Parents and Masters to consider the obligation that is upon them in this respect, and to look that their Children and Servants do the same: We owe not onely our selves, but all ours, to the honour and service of Almighty God; And if Children were taught, as they should be, their duty to worship and praise God in the publick Assemblies, and encouraged therein by the example of their Elders, it would be a mighty Argument to perswade them to learn the most distinct and graceful way of Reading. I have been much pleased to see the good success of this care in some Parents that are well affected to the Common Prayer, whose Children read their part of the Psalms with a better grace than many when grown to be Men can do: And when these do attain to a perfection herein, it will beget in them a great delight in that heavenly Exercise, and make them love to attend the Prayers; and this doubtless will be a mighty Antidote against Prophaneness and Schism, and both plant and root in our minds that Doctrine whence a holy Life cannot but spring.

II. That being prepared as before, we should endeavour our selves to perform our part of this Service in the best manner we are able.

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There are some things which I have observed in the performance of the People, that seem to be very indecent. As first, That they speak when they should hear; repeating together with the Minister, (and often before him) the *Prefatory Admonition* wherewith the Minister is to begin this Service, and the *Absolution* which he gives them after the *General Confession*; the *Commandments* also, and many other things appointed for the Minister alone; which is by all wise men held very improper and indecent.

The Church indeed hath ordered some things to be said after the Minister, with great advice. As, 1. The *General Confession*, wherein we solemnize that *Repentance* that gives us admittance into the reconciled state, that which makes all our Services acceptable to God. And there is this great advantage in the conjunction of all therein (and that with the Voice as well as the Heart,) That the professing of our Repentance in that manner, hath all the circumstances that may make it satisfactory and obliging, (at least as far as the Church can provide in the case.) Therein every one doth as it were accuse, judge, and condemn himself before God and the whole Congregation, for sins contained under

under the general heads therein mentioned (the particular instances whereof are only fit to be repeated in secret Confession on to God himself) and if he do it seriously, with a Devotion suitable to the Words, it is to me a more satisfactory sign of penitence, than the enlarged Confessions used in the other Way; wherein some, (to seem fervent, or to make themselves so) run into the enumeration of sins beyond due measures, being, as I think, beyond what the Congregation in general can be supposed (though Christians of a sort inferiour to themselves, at least in their own judgment) to be ordinarily conscious that they have been guilty in. And 'tis also obliging; for this should be a mighty argument against returning to sin, when we have solemnly confessed our folly and guilt therein before God and the Congregation: For having as it were called God and Man to witness the truth and sincerity of our Repentance, it will be a high aggravation of our carelessness, if we suffer our selves easily to be drawn to sin again; and that either in omitting our Duty, or committing Iniquity in any kind: and it will engage every good man to *watch and pray, lest he should enter into temptation*, and be hurried into the sins for which he hath so condemned himself.

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The 2d. is the *Lord's Prayer*; which (because it teacheth the forming of the affections and desires of our Souls unto the most excellent order, and raising them by degrees to the highest perfection, and because it comprehends the heads of whatever is to be sought by us at the hands of God, and that with greatest brevity and plainness) it is necessary to be learned of all, even from their first attainment of the use of Reason and Speech; And this the Church cannot better provide for, than by engaging them always to say it after the Minister: and besides, it implies a declaration of our Christian Unity, and a renunciation of all Heresies and Schisms as far as we know them: And we do the greater honour to God and our blessed Saviour, in that we repeat that Prayer in the most solemn and triumphant manner we are able; and every one, by a great fervency and devotion therein, doth most effectually edifie his Brethren.

The 3d. is, the Repetition of the *Creeds*; a thing so useful to implant the brief sum of Christian Doctrine in the memories of all, and to declare our common joy and exultancy in the belief and profession of those truths upon which the hopes of our common Salvation is built,

as also to assist the production and growth of the blessed fruits and effects of our Faith, by a daily cherishing the Root; which we do by this solemn profession, and the renewed consideration that we should joyn with it: I say, a thing, in these respects (and many other) that may be thought so useful, that all good men must needs commend the wisdom of the Church in ordering the same.

These are all of that kind that I remember in the daily Service, (to which this discourse chiefly relates) and in these it is very commendable to say after the Minister: but now, if those that are naturally loquacious, finding a delight in saying what they should, remit the Exercise of their consideration so far, as to say that they should not; here is a fault that ought to be amended; and I am sure, on serious thoughts, they that love our Prayers will freely incline so to do. For they will easily perceive, how indecent it is for them to say after the Minister where he is supposed to speak to them; either by way of Exhortation, Consolation, or Admonition; and that the People should absolve the Priest, as much as the Priest absolves them; this hath great absurdity, and on that consideration will, I hope, readily be reformed.

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'Tis true, in the Conclusion of the *Absolution*, when the Minister speaks to himself as well as the People (as the result of his declaration of God's pardoning mercy to the penitent) to exhort that we should beseech God to grant us true Repentance and his Holy Spirit, &c. we may very profitably joyn with a soft Voice, *Lord grant us true Repentance and thy holy Spirit, that those things may please thee which we do at this present, &c.* (And this will supply a defect which some complain of, *viz.* That there is in our Service no preparatory Prayer:) For being now presently to begin the most immediate act of Worship in the words of our blessed Lord, and to joyn with the Heavenly Host in Hallowing God's Name, and to proceed to all the rest; it is meet that we prepare our selves with this humble desire, that God will assist the sincerity of our Repentance, and bestow on us the grace of his Holy Spirit; that such performance may be well-pleasing to him, and the effect profitable to us, rendring us more pure and holy in the remainder of our lives, and so securing our admittance into his Eternal Joys at the end thereof.

2. As the former custom of saying after the Minister where we should attend and

and say nothing, seems indecent; so it seems as much, if not more so, when the People say before him, what they should say after him; and this appears to be a disorder on the fore-mentioned account that it is an invading his Ministerial Function; for he is to lead and guide the people in all the publick Offices of Religion, and neither to follow their humours in the manner of his Prayers (if he were, in other respects, to order them as he pleased) or to follow the measure of their Voices, (where the words as well as the matter is prescribed) though in both respects, Ministers are fain sometimes to depart from their right. And as I have known, in former times, many that used the way of Extempory Prayer before their Sermon, only to humour the people, when in their own judgment they much prefer'd the constant use of a well-composed Form; so I know some now, who do read the Prayers very fast (and that beyond what the solemnity of the matter can bear) only (as I charitably hope) because they see the people so subject to this disorder of running before them (which they know not how to remedy otherwise) or because they see some hate to be long at Church. But besides this, there are other ill effects of this custom,

stom, in respect of our selves and others : For it much hinders the devout operation of the mind, which is much assisted by hearing the matter first spoken by the Minister, and by fixing on the intent consideration thereof, which he speaks so as we can speak afterwards with much greater fervency and affection, as every ones experience will witness, that will but try the thing.

And again, those that have so accustomed themselves to speak before the Minister, are at a far greater loss to say such *New Prayers*, or *Penitential Psalms*, which are sometimes ordered on Fasts, to be said with the Minister, than those who are rightly practised in the regular way, for that makes it easie to say, and that very decently, such things after the Minister as we never heard before. For if we attend well unto the main of the Sentence which we are to repeat we shall be able to guess at the Conclusion; so that we need not stay till he hath quite done before we begin, but may hear the last while we speak the first so as to say all right, and may come up with him in the conclusion, as is most decent. And this would make much for the solemn performance of the Service on extraordinary times; wherein now, for the

the most part, only the Minister and Clerk are Speakers, and the Congregation sit and look on; which to me, shews very ill.

But further, I have heard some complain, that come over from the *Nonconformists* to our Church, and attend our Prayers, That this is to them a most offensive disorder; and that it tended very much to distract their Devotion when those that sit by them thus ramble over the Prayers, and are at the end before the Minister is half way; and I believe it cannot but give some disturbance to the Minister himself: I am sure it hath been no small offence to me; so that I could hardly forbear telling them of it, but that I considered it required more sedate discourse than that season would afford: And this was one chief cause I engaged in this work; and I hope those who have not considered this matter, will be perswaded, by what I have written, to order themselves better for the time to come.

The 3d. thing is, that the people generally answer the Minister (especially in the *Responses* and *Psalmody*) with too soft a voice; and are so little heard, that it hath seemed to me (coming into the Church whilst such Exercise was performing) as if
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the Minister read a Verse, and then stop'd a while and read again, the people being so little heard ; (especially if the Clerk be absent, as he may have often occasion to be, where Prayers are read every day.) That it seem'd to me very unsuitable to the nature of that Exercise, wherein we are to declare our Joy and Exultancy in God ; and therefore (in speaking, as well as singing) should *lift up our Voices, and praise him lustily and with a good courage*, as it is *Psal. 81. 1.* And in many places the Scripture exhorts to a great chearfulness in this Exercise, and to do it with loud and exalted Voices. And if we did so, it would make it shew like another thing than it doth in the way I reprove, and would render it more laudatory and honourable to Almighty God, and more pleasant and comfortable to our selves ; and it would also remove the offence that some take against it as Unedifying ; for that it is only on account of this I mention, because they can understand but half the *Psalms* through the imperfect murmur of the people in repeating their part. For if every one spake as loud and plain in repeating his Verse, as the Minister doth in repeating his, (as they ought to do if they would have it appear like *Psalmody*)

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or an Office of Praise) there would be no cause for this Complaint : And also those that cannot read, who might be helped, by the next by-stander, to perform their part without it, or at least may understand as much as if the Minister read all, and so be more edified in that holy Joy which this manner of reading is apt to beget.

And I wish also, that people had the art to speak in some kind of Concord with the Minister, either that their Voices might be Unisons with his, or a Fifth or an Eighth from it : For there is a *Speaking*, as well as *Singing* together, that is very harsh, by reason of a discordancy in the Voices of those that perform it. And if men that have understanding in this matter, and good strong Voices, would set themselves to do their part, it would soon bring the Congregation to a better performance. And why should they not think themselves concerned so to do ? Is there any Exercise in the world of a higher nature, or more immediately design'd to the Glory and Honour of Almighty God ? Besides, it is done as in his sight and presence, and therefore to be done with a manly courage, and the best skill we are able. And nothing can be more exhilarating to pious minds, in that there-

therein we have communion together in celebrating the Divine Praises, and in repeating the Histories of God's wonderful Works with one mouth as well as with one mind : nor more edifying, in that it is a provoking one another to worship, fear, and obey him, *speaking to our selves, and teaching and admonishing one another, as the Apostle exhorts, in Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, singing with grace, and making melody to the Lord in our hearts, Eph. 5. 19. Colos. 3. 16.* For the gracious Harmony which we find in our Souls between our Reason and the truth of the Divine Revelations, between our Affections and the goodness and suitableness of the objects therein proposed (especially as these powers are renewed by the Holy Ghost) must needs yield an unspeakable delight to our selves; and also we *make melody in our hearts to the Lord*, when we exercise the Graces of Faith, and Love, and Joy, and Hope therein (which is our singing with grace) so as to express them to the sense of others: By this solemn, serious, and joyful manner of speaking we also *teach and admonish one another*; for such pleasant conversation in repeating those excellent parts of Scripture, sweetly insinuates holy Doctrine, teaching one another to follow God and his Saints,

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Saints, whose vertues and blessedness we celebrate; and admonishing one another to take heed lest we have any fellowship with the Wicked whose vices we condemn; and remember their woful downfalls, as ensamples to warn us to repent, lest we also perish as they have done.

Now this being so pleasant and profitable an Exercise, why should not all good Men endeavour to revive the credit thereof, by the most excellent manner of performance? Certainly it had never been in the power of Satan or his Instruments to have brought into contempt a thing that is so heavenly and angelical, if Men had not remitted their care of doing it as they ought.

For our lauding and praising our most great and gracious Gqd, and communicating the delights of heaven-born Souls in this Way of responsory speaking, is so accommodate to the capacity of all, descending to the very meanest without abating the delights of the greatest, that it is strange that any should not like it. I have known some Families, that for many Generations have been so defective in the way of artificial Singing, that no one Person of them could ever sing the Tune of a Psalm in any tolerable manner; yet these can

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praise God with the Congregation in this way of repeating the Psalms by turns; and Children may be much earlier taught to do so in this, than in any other way. And though this doth create delight to some that cannot sing, yet it is no abatement of delight to others that are skilful in Musick: For that way of Singing, which is now most commended, is but a melodious kind of Speaking; and all Musical Graces that hinder the understanding of Words, are quite out of fashion. So that here is a delight, that offers itself, most early, to be the Felicity of Humane Nature, anticipating the base and brutish delights of Sense, that press upon us for entertainment, on the account of their being pleasant and necessary; and that before we can well discover the slightness of their pretences thereunto. And 'tis also such a Pleasure as loseth not its relish in any Age, but still continueth its force and power, to counter-work the insinuations of such Delights, in all parts of life, as may be prejudicial to our spiritual Felicity: and to sweeten and sanctifie all the rest.

And I perswade myself, that if Persons of Age and Honour, and those that have some excellency of Art, would but design and endeavour to make the best of this Way,

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Way, they would find great satisfaction to themselves thereby; and would also beget an ambition, in the younger sort, to do worthily, in performing their part in this heavenly Psalmody: And Youth, being so encouraged, would soon conceive such a pleasure as I have before spoken of; and this (in conjunction with other appointed means) would mightily facilitate the work of their Conversion from a carnal to a spiritual Life, engaging them heartily in the Combat against the Enemies of their souls, and in a serious prosecution of true Felicity, (as obliged by Baptism). It is evident, that Life without pleasure is an empty name, and little more desirable than Death: *David* lamenting, in his own person, the deplorable Miseries to which Man in his best state is now subject, asks the question, *Wherefore God hath made all men for nought?* and yet the Apostle tells of some who *lived in pleasure*, that they were *dead while they lived*; hence we may conclude, that Man is a Creature capable of two sorts of Pleasure, Mental, and Carnal; and that these do for the most part militate against each other: and if carnal Pleasures prevail, and get the possession of our Life, we are said to be *dead* in respect of our minds and spiritual part; but if the Delights of

the Mind once take place, and become our Employment, then the Body is said to be *dead, dead by reason of sin as the spirit is life because of righteousness.* So that it is of mighty avail, to cherish these spiritual Pleasures, and depress those that are carnal ; especially in the beginning of our life ; as that upon which the Happiness of our whole Life depends. And this, I think, may be done by a *pious and prudent Instruction in the fore-mentioned Duty, and by giving a good Example to encourage the performance.* I cannot give this matter the explication it requires : but I hope a word to the Wise will be sufficient.

Having hinted these things, to rectify what seem'd to me amiss ; I shall now briefly sum up all by representing that Behaviour which I judge most decent in the performance of these Sacred Offices : First then, having a due sense of what you are going about, *viz.* to approach the most glorious and dreadful Presence of the Almighty ; and having composed your minds to worship him with that Reverence and Devotion you ought, and declared this by the solemn manner of your coming into his House, and placing yourself in the station wherein you are to perform your part

in this holy Exercise ; you are to fix your eyes on the Reader, as the Minister of God ; the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts ; sent to call you to Repentance, with offers of Peace and Reconciliation, that you may escape his dreadful Wrath, which none can endure or withstand ; which Wrath the Host of Heaven and Powers of Hell, as well as the Creatures here on Earth, are ready to minister, against all impenitent and prophane Wretches. You are to stand up and attend seriously to the reading of those *Scripture - Sentences* wherewith he begins this Service ; wherein are declared, in the very words of God himself, the necessity of Repentance, and the certainty of Pardon, and of his gracious acceptance of all that truly perform it.

You are also well to consider the inforcement of those *Sentences*, by his reading the *Exhortation* following ; in the mean time reflecting on yourself with a due remembrance of your particular sins, that you may be the better prepared to accompany him, with a pure Heart and humble Voice, in the *General Confession* following. And this Confession (as it is ordered) we should make, in the most humble posture ; which, according to the use and custom of this Country, is kneeling on our Knees ;

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and

and this none are to omit, except hindred, by bodily infirmity or such inconveniences as are sometimes occasioned by Crowds of People; and in such case they must take care to supply that defect by other expressions of humble Reverence. And we ought so to speak in repeating the same after the Minister, that we thereby express, that we verily believe ourselves to be guilty (in many particular instances) of many sins contained under the several Heads there mentioned; and that we are heartily sorry for the same, and earnestly implore pardoning Mercy and Forbearance, and to be restored to God's Grace and Favour, trusting to his Promises made to us in Christ; and with no less earnestness desire the assistance of God's Grace, to enable us to live better for the future. This faithful endeavour to appear as humble Penitents before God and the Congregation, will suppress the workings of *Pride and Self-conceit* (the Parent of all Vice) and strengthen *Humility*, (the Nurse of all Virtues) and beget that brotherly Love which is founded in true Piety and Humility.

In attending in the same posture while the Minister, as God's Herald, pronounceth *Absolution and Pardon to the truly penitent, that unfeignedly believe the Gospel*; we ought

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to expresse a great Reverence of the Almighty (from whom he speaks) and also the most humble Thankfulness, and holy Joy for his rich Grace; which Grace is communicated to us by the Stewards of his Mysteries, and cannot be received, in the contempt of their Administrations whom he hath impowred to dispencc the same: And withal, earnestly begging (according to his Exhortation) that our Faith and Repentance may be assisted by Divine Cooperation, that we never fail of the same Grace, for want of meet dispositions to receive it; nor neglect the improvement thereof when bestowed, either at present or for the future.

When we have thus prepared ourselves, we ought, with heavenly Joy, and great Fervency, to joyn with the Minister and Congregation in repeating that Divine Prayer which our Saviour taught. The beginning whereof being Eucharistical; containing such Petitions as are for the immediate honour and glory of God; it is fit, that we lift up our hands and eyes to Heaven, when with our voices we declare our joy in God; and exultancy in his Praises. In the rest we supplicate things necessary for ourselves; therefore we should expresse greatest humility, in bowing our

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Heads and Bodies towards the Earth ; as unworthy to ask so great things, of so great a Majesty ; and speak we should also with more lowly and humble Voices in repeating the same. Until , returning, in the Doxology, to the acknowledgment of his Paternal Government, which inclines him ; of his Power, which enables him, and of his Glory, which engages him to be so good to his Creatures ; and especially to his Children ; we again lift up our hearts and hands to Heaven, and repeat the same chearful Voices.

After this, we pass to that high and heavenly work of praising God, in the Psalms and Hymns following : Now tho' it were the work for which chiefly we were made, and the excellent power of Speech given us ; and that to which (while we continued innocent and happy) our mouth was still opened, and we had freedom and power to perform the same ; yet now sin and sorrow, guilt and fear, cares and vexations, have even made us dumb to God's Praises, and disabled us for due celebration hereof : Therefore in this respect we ought most devoutly to joyn with the Minister in the Response following the Lord's Prayer, **Lord open thou our Mouths, And our Lips shall**

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shall shew forth thy praise. O God make speed to save us, O Lord, make hast to help us. And while we seek his Grace, we should use our own endeavours to open our own Mouths, and lift up our voices, while we sing his Praises; and to awaken all our powers, to a cheerful performance of this Service.

The *Gloria Patri* follows; at the repetition whereof we are required to stand; a posture most fit in all manner of *Psalmody*, and when ever we speak or sing praise and glory to God; but especially in the Publick Assemblies convened chiefly for that purpose. And in pronouncing these words of Glory, it would be very indecent to do it in any posture that is less reverent. To sit, is very offensive to all that desire to see this Service duely performed. And it is reason it should be so; for these words signifie a most immediate Address to God, the Ever Blessed Trinity in Unity, in the highest act of Christian Worship; and so fitly do they serve to the Adoration of the Deity, according to the Faith of our Religion, that the Man that doth not express the inward reverence and adoration of his mind, by the devout manner of his pronouncing them, and by a fit deportment at that time; gives suspicion of some defect

in his Christianity, or of some mistake in the way of expressing the same. And this erect posture of our Bodies, would mind us to lift up our Hearts, yea, and our Voices too, in giving praise and glory unto this Blessed Trinity; whereas the other disposeth us to a defect in both: and therefore, not only to avoid giving offence, but for our own benefit we should observe it.

Being next to proceed to praise God by the repetition of the *Psalms* of *David*, &c. the Minister (that he may mind us that it is not the ordinary reading those parts of Scripture for instruction, but the repeating them as an Office of Praise and Solemn Worship to Almighty God) I say, the Minister on that account is ordered to say, **Praise ye the Lord;** and the People to answer, **The Lord's Name be praised.** In hearing and saying which words, we must endeavour to excite in ourselves holy desires to praise God, and so to perform this Exercise, as may tend most abundantly to his Glory and Honour.

The Psalm with which we always begin at Morning-Prayer, is, **Come, let us sing unto the Lord;** and is most fitly chosen, both for mutual provocation to this heavenly Exercise, and for instruction in the reasons thereof; and withal

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to insinuate that obedience to all God commands in the whole course of our lives should be consequent to the adoration and praise of God as our God; shewing in the conclusion the dreadful danger of not attending to the *same*: which excellent matter requires that we be *serious* and *intent* in repeating this Psalm, as that which will prepare and dispose us to be so in all the rest.

As for the *repetition of the Psalms in course* that follows; I have hinted before what is needful in that matter; one thing pray remember, that none should take liberty to sit in that performance, except constrained by bodily infirmity; because standing is so much more fit a posture for the Office of Thanksgiving; and sitting was counted so indecent in the Primitive Times, that the whole Service was called *Station*; and sitting is only indulged now in some Parts for bodily weakness, and because of the great decay of Piety, which will not bear such strictness.

After the Psalms, a *Chapter* is read out of the *Old Testament*, that we may be instructed in the Doctrine of the Creation and Government of the first World, its Destruction and Restitution; the Promises of the MESSIA, and procedure of God's

God's Grace in preparing Men for Him, in bringing them to Him, and saving them by Him, as also in the correspondency of our *Saviour's* Doctrine to that which God of old delivered by his Prophets; his agreement to the Types and Figures of him under the Law, and the accomplishment of what *Moses* and the Prophets wrote, in that which he was, did, and suffered: in such, and many other respects, the reading thereof is profitable; and therefore all talking, gazing, and careless behaviour (too often seen at this time) should be avoided, and we should appear as diligent Auditors of those Divine Oracles.

The instruction therein given us to it, and the respite we have had hereby in it, should cause us to return with greater joy and cheerfulness to this heavenly work of praising God. For which, there is next prepared the *Evangelical Hymn TE DEUM*, the most excellent that ever was composed by Man, and speaks as much of Divine Inspiration as any thing (not acknowledged for such) ever did: 'tis so fitted for Divine Adoration, and apt to excite Devotion, and to minister most abundantly to the Consolation of good Christians, that even that alone (methinks) should draw us to Church, if not withheld by great obligations.

gations. I do therefore most earnestly recommend to you the most solemn appearance, and the most devout acts of Worship, and the most plain, joyful, and reverent manner of speaking, and what ever you can think becomes the repetition of those excellent words.

The Adoration of God, and of our Saviour by the foresaid Exercise, cannot but dispose us to the next, *viz.* the Chapter out of the *New Testament*, which being called New for its excellency and perpetuity above the Old, and reporting to us either the wonderful Works of Christ and his Apostles, their holy and incomparable Doctrine, or perfect and exemplary Lives, cannot be too diligently and reverently attended to: And I should think those who have strength of body, would do very commendably in standing up at the reading thereof, on the same reasons for which we do so at reading the Gospel.

Then we are ordered to return again to the work of *Praising* God; which nothing but Carnality can ever be weary of. And the *Psalms* here appointed, are such as minister most fitly to the Joy conceived by hearing the glad tidings of the Gospel sent to the *Gentiles* (of which we were) as well as to the *Jews*; and therefore to shew that
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we have not *received that Grace in vain*, nor heard the Gospel of it without diligent heed, we should repeat that *Psalm* devoutly and joyfully.

The next that follows is the *CREED*, which contains those matters in which *all Christians* are of one *Mind*, (all that *believe with their hearts to Righteousness*) and of which *all Christians* must make publick Profession, (all that will *Confess with their mouths to Salvation*.) We therefore, in one posture and all with our Faces one way, (as indeed it should be, and would be if the Reader did give the example) do with one *mouth* repeat that excellent *Form of sound Words*, which so excellently ministers to the steadfastness of our Faith, our rejoycing in Hope, our unity in Love, and cheerfulness in the Praises of God and our Saviour, that no Man, that considers it, could chuse but stand up and bear his part with us; and he that finds no spiritual joy and elevation of mind in repeating the *Creed*, can have nothing else but a *natural* delight in hearing the most excellent Sermon, or ravishing Prayer: For neither of these can have any *Matter* that is more transporting; and if it be only the *words* or *passion of the Speaker* that affects us, 'tis no *spiritual* delight. Let those therefore
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take heed, who regard not to honour God, and express the joy of their Faith, by a due performance in this matter.

After this, we return to the solemn Duty of *Prayer*; which that we may perform with mutual Charity, and great Devotion, the Minister salutes the People with that excellent Option, **The Lord be with you:** and they return, **And with thy Spirit.** Which words, spoken with the holy affection they ought, are apt to beget such a disposition of mind, as will render the Prayers very acceptable to God, and edifying to one another. The Minister yet farther (to awaken all the powers of our Souls to this most serious business) is to say, **Let us pray:** which therefore we should compose ourselves to do with all our might.

The *Response* wherewith we begin, **Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy,** serves most fitly to assist this endeavour of great fervency; and being repeated without it, seems very indecent, and a kind of *vain Repetition*: therefore remember this.

Then we renew the Repetition of the *Lord's Prayer*; which Prayer certainly is of that excellency, that no Christian should think it too much to use it both in the beginning

ginning and end of this Service. And indeed, this is the very sum and substance of all our Prayers; and others are added only for greater solemnity, and fuller explication: And therefore the oftner it is repeated, the more devoutly it should be said, and greater fervency excited by it: of which before.

To relax a little the great intention of mind that should accompany all our Prayers, but especially the Lord's prayer we have that excellent *Response*, wherein the Minister and People exchange some devout Ejaculations, *for themselves, for their Superiours, and for their Brethren*: which as they mix *holy delight with fervency*, so they greatly strengthen the Bands of Christian Unity.

The rest of the time we spend in repeating several *Collects*; most excellent for the matter, and comprehensive for the words: In praying for the King and Royal Family, for Magistrates and Ministers, the Church and State; all Christians, and all Men; and in giving solemn Thanks for God's mercies to us and them: in all which we should strive to preserve a constant intention, and true devotion of mind: and if, to that end, we accompany the Minister with our voice (as many do) it should be
always

always with such caution as I have expressed before; and so it may be very useful thereunto; and also it would make us perfect in saying those Prayers, which may be of great use to us in other cases, besides that, of our joyning with the Congregation therein. But now if Men having got the faculty of saying the Prayers readily by heart, do let their Tongues run before Wits, and say faster than it can be thought they understand, or can consider what they say; then they abuse God's good gifts, and shame themselves, and disturb others. It was greatly blam'd by the Apostle, that some of those who had received the miraculous Gift of Tongues, were so forward in the use of it, as that it hindred their due consideration of the things they spake, and others understanding them; for amending whereof, he proposeth his own example to their imitation, saying, *I will pray with the spirit*, but yet so, as *with the understanding also*; and I think we may infer something from hence for our instruction in this matter. I have taken liberty of some repetition and enlargement here, because I have often heard this Disorder complained of since the first Edition of this Book; and many with the Reprinting of it for this very reason, that it may be lent or given to those,

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in whom they observe this Disorder, to rectifie their practice herein.

What I have here discoursed shews, that I believe this Service to be well ordered to prevent all wandring thoughts, to preserve a due presence of mind, to promote pious affections, and to give the best entertainment to true Devotion; and indeed on all these accounts I do wonder very much that it is not had in greater estimation.

But Men must do their own part, also towards this; therefore, I earnestly admonish all Men to avoid sitting, lolling, leaning, and all indecent postures, and to continue kneeling meekly and devoutly, in the whole Performance if they can. And I think Men too apt to plead Infirmitie, out of indulgence to the *Flesh*, which should be taught to suffer something for the honour of God, and interests of *our Souls*, which have suffered a great deal by its pleasures and passions: and I doubt not, the pain we endure to express our reverent Adoration of the Almighty in this his Solemn Worship, shall be accepted of God as a part of Our Mortifications, and of our Conformity to Christ and his Church; and no Christian that considers the great and most dolorous pain wherein Christ offered himself in Sacrifice on the

the Cross, can think much to endure some little pain, that we may offer our Sacrifices of Prayers and Praises with that reverence which becomes us : nor can any Man have that sence of the adorable Majesty of the most High, when his head and elbows lye on the bench of his seat, as when he kneels in an erect posture with his eyes and hands lift up to Heaven. The actions of the Body have a great influence on the Soul ; as well as, on the contrary, the Souls affections move it to act : Besides the decency of this, which is so evident, that I may appeal to Men themselves in this case, as the Apostle in another of the same nature, (being in a matter of Indecency in God's Worship) *Judge in yourselves what is meet.* Can any Man think it fit to supplicate the infinite Majesty of Heaven and Earth in any but the most humble posture of body, (which with us is Kneeling) or that we ought to sit on our breeches when we sing or speak praise unto him ? Certainly the power of Errour is very great, that it can blind the mind of Man in a matter so evident and plain. But I trust that those to whom I write are not so deceived.

Yet I would not be thought to commend any such Uneasiness, as is either against the due composure of the Mind, or the

the good estate of the Body : I know God will have Mercy and not Sacrifice, and prefers the due operations of the Mind before the most devout actions of the Body, (especially where they cannot be both in perfection, but our exactness in one must necessitate some relaxation in the other.) But there is an uneasiness that is so small, that it rather helps than hinders inward Devotion, and disturbs nothing but a lazie humour, or ill habit ; things no way to be indulged. But yet where there is such real Infirmary as justly excuseth from Standing, or Kneeling upright, &c. Men should be careful that in what posture soever they be, they make such expressions of Seriousness and Devotion, that it may appear to the Congregation that they omit nothing out of Laziness, Contempt of the Orders of the Church, or a prophane Spirit.

I have now run over the Daily Office of *Morning Prayer* ; and shall proceed no farther, because he that will observe what I have written in that, cannot be to seek in ordering himself aright in all the rest.

It may not be inconvenient in the Conclusion, to offer something that may help us to shew our Devotion in leaving the Church, as well as in coming to it and continuing there. It is said of the ancient

Jews,

Jews, that they went out of the Synagogues backward, that they might declare their unwillingness to leave God's House, in which holy Men have desired ever to dwell. And (whatever that way of expressing this may seem to some) I am sure there ought to be such affections in us, as was thereby signified; and nothing we do that is contrary thereunto, can seem decent to wise Men; and if People's hurrying out of the Church as soon as ever the Sermon or Prayers are ended, be not apparently contrary to such affection, my conceit deceives me; especially, when they will not stay to take God's blessing along with them; I say God's, for though a Man pronounceth it, yet it is such a Man, as is his Minister and Herald, the Steward of his Mysteries, whose words, as such, he will never suffer to fall to the ground, but will give them their effect on all that are meet Subjects: and therefore to despise that glorious and mysterious Blessing wherewith these holy Offices are concluded, shews great Ignorance to Profaneness, and little manners, and is an affront to the Blessed Trinity, and to the Congregation met to do Worship thereunto.

POST.

P O S T S C R I P T.

ONe thing I have thought fit to add, as useful to the design of this Paper, which is, My humble Request to Ministers and Vestries, that they will take care that fit and worthy Persons be put into the Office of Parish-Clerks; for that the defects of the People in performing their part of this Service, is chiefly imputable to this cause, that they have not a Clerk that is able to lead them in the right way of that performance: for if the People would but consider, that 'tis the special work of a Clerk to Guidethem in what they are to say and do in this Service, and would make such observation of him as they ought, (he standing so advantageously for the same) it would bring the whole Congregation unto a good performance. Some Persons that may offer themselves, and that it may be the Parishes interest to chuse, may have such natural Defects, that they can never be made fit for the place; and some are of such a profane Spirit, that they will never set themselves to study to do their duty therein. Both these

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are to be rejected; whatever advantages the Parish may make by their Election: for, so sacred a thing, as the Worship and Service of Almighty God, is not to be subjugated to the secular Interests of Men: And it is a great reproach to any Parish, that, to save themselves a little charge in maintaining a poor Family, they should employ a Person to be Guide to the People in this most solemn Office of Divine Worship, that is in any way a scandal or dishonour thereunto, or unfit to perform it as he ought. And if any such be already in the place, my request is, that the Minister and Vestry will use their Authority to reform them, and engage them to study the most decent and graceful manner of performance; and if that cannot be effected, to force them to admit the help of another, in that matter, though they continue to do the Parish-business in other respects. I make this humble Request, because I believe that a Clerk that was a devout Man, and one that had a good command of his Voice, if he would set himself to study, to excel in performing what is required of him, he would greatly assist the People in the well performance of their part, and excite them thereunto.

A. N

A N
 APPLICATION
 TO THE
Clergy and to the People.

To the C L E R G Y.

AND now I most humbly beseech the Reverend Clergy of this Church, that they will not despise the Advice of so unworthy a Person: If there be not *Truth* in what I write, I desire not to be regarded; but if there be, *Truth* is a thing so Divine and Excellent, as not, for my unworthiness, or for any defects in the delivery, to be rejected; especially, when it is Truth of the highest concern that can be imagined, that which concerns (and that most immediately) the glory and honour of the most High

High God, and his Son Jesus Christ our most holy Saviour; that which concerns the supream good of the best of earthly Creatures, and that with relation to his better part, and his eternal state; that which much concerns the happiness and well-fare of this flourishing Church, and tends to its Unity, Sanctity, and Glory: That which concerns the discharge of your great Duty to God and his Church, and is the best Return of the Benefits you partake from both; I say, when it is *Truth* of such concern, methinks it should be consider'd, and that whoever it come from as the Instrument, since God himself must be acknowledged the Author.

The Worship and Service of God hath been esteemed of all wise Men, the chief of those things wherein Men or Angels could employ themselves; 'Tis the principal End of bringing Men into Holy Orders, and of instituting Christian Assemblies, the greatest Means of inducing that super-excellent Principle of the Divine Life, that Evangelical Spirit which only can overcome our Vices, and sublime Moral Vertues into Christian Graces, and make our good Works Seeds of eternal Glory. This is the Prelibation of and Preparation for the unspeakable Joys above: 'Tis this for which all our Noble

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Faculties were given us : 'Tis this that chiefly distinguisheth us from Beasts, and that, more then the meer shape of our Bodies, or our Natural Reason, and gives us the greatest Likeness unto, and Communication with the Angels. 'Tis the Worship of One God that is the greatest Incentive to Love, and the strongest Bond of Peace among Men ; and among Christians, it becomes more so, when we worship Him in and through One Mediator and Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Natural Worship which was offer'd in the State of Innocency, the Superstitious Worship of guilty and affrighted Criminals, the Typical and Pedægogical Worship of Mosaical Institution, all these had something of Excellency in them ; nay, they were the best thing the World had besides : But the Excellency and Glory of Evangelical Worship is above them all, it far exceeds whatever else we can do in this Life, and is the highest Felicity of the Life to come ; Angels began it here on Earth, *Luke 2. 13, 14* and shall rejoyce to accompany us therein when we are in Heaven. A Man that hath the Power of Godliness in his Soul, is apt to say when he is at Church, as the Disciples when they were on the Holy Mount, *Lord it is good for us to be here ;* or as *David* on the

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, and
 are ever praising thee.
 These Things I have touched, that I
 might introduce this great Consideration,
 That the most learned and highly dignified of
 the Clergy ought not to think it any abasement
 of themselves, but their great honour to read
 Common-Prayer: 'Tis not (as some would
 perswade us) the easiness of the Thing that
 can make it contemptible: There was no
 great difficulty in that which God requir'd
 of the Priests in the Services of the Temple,
 yet was their Office esteem'd no small Ho-
 nour; the reason whereof was, because they
 approached nigh to God in the Offices of
 his Solemn Worship: for as the Greatness
 of God's Majesty requires, that not every
 one that can do the Thing, be admitted to
 perform it, as an act of his Solemn Wor-
 ship; but that it be done by Persons so-
 lemnly set apart thereunto; so the Conse-
 cration which Men receive unto this Of-
 fice gives them the chiefest Dignity and
 Honour that is to be found among Man-
 kind; and all Nations ever had their Priests
 in highest Esteem (however they are scorn-
 ed in this prophane Age.) But then if
 their approach to God in the Offices of his
 Worship, which puts this great Honour up-
 on them, becomes contemptible in their
 eyes,

eyes, and they think scorn of all but Preaching; I think they do greatly err.

And when (through bodily Infirmary or the Attendance on other parts of this Ministry) they are obliged to employ Readers, I think, for the same reason, that they ought to take care that they get such as (at least) do not scandalize that Service either by their wicked Lives (or undecent Performances). To perform the Public Service of God in the Assemblies of his Servants, is too great an honour to be put on Fools or vile Persons: Certainly something very considerable must be pleaded in excuse of those, who professing a great Zeal for Holiness in their preaching, are careless whether the Prayers be read well or ill; and that do employ such to read them that are a dishonour to this Service. It cannot be sufficient to say that these Readers are poor Men, and that they have no other way to live; and that they employ them out of meer Charity: For that Charity to Men which is against the Love of God, and a Regard to the Solemnity of his Worship, is an ill sort of Charity: And so is that Charity to particular Persons which is against the Edification of the Church: Nay, I am of Opinion, it is no Charity to those to whom it is shewed; for their ill Read-

ing proceeding (for the most part) from their vicious lives, which hath destroyed in them that sense of God and Religion, which is the only due preparation to a well performance of this Service (as I observed before) so long as they see that slubbering over the Service without that Seriousness and Devotion which their corrupt Affections cannot admit, and which for the reason fore-mentioned, they find it difficult to counterfeit; I say, whilst this will serve to get their living, they will not be so easily brought to Repentance, as if (being rejected of all on this account and brought to extreme poverty) they were taught by the Rod to reflect on their folly, and to see the necessity of Amendment. Affliction is God's way of teaching men to Repent, and I think men should not think to find any better. Therefore I wish that if Scholars will be prophane, they may know they must be poor; and none that have power would put them into employment in the Church, or own them; but as they have nothing to do to take God's Name into their mouths, while they hate to be Reformed, and cast God's Word behind their backs, so the Church will not suffer them to do it, especially when it is apparent they desire it

for a Secular Advantage, and to maintain them in a Vicious Life, and not out of any desire to Serve God and his Church. And I earnestly pray that a stop may be put to the admission of such into the Ministry if it might be, although I know 'tis extream difficult as things stand. For, as our Church directs, so we have great need to pray at this time, *That God will so guide and govern the minds of the Bishops and Pastors of the Church, that they may lay hands suddenly on no man, &c.* which Prayer, I hope, will offend none.

Some there are also that do it thus slightly out of Erroneous Principles, and some out of Carnal Wisdom, the first sort think the Common Prayer a grievous Imposition, and that they ought to be left to their liberty to Pray as they please; but because the Rulers will have it so, they submit to it only to get their livings, or else, for the sake of Preaching; which being of so great necessity to men's Salvation, they think it must not be forsaken, though they are forc'd to accompany it with a defective disorderly Form, (as they think ours is) and they hope their good intentions towards men's Salvation will excuse their using it, when they can do no better. But men thus minded will make what haste they

can to rid themselves of what is burdensome, and so ramble over the Service without that Devotion it requires, and plainly shew by their careless manner of Reading that they do not love the *Common Prayer*, though they are forc'd to use it.

My Opinion is, that men of this temper (as well as of the former) ought not to be encouraged neither by the Church nor the Ministers thereof; and that they do need both Repentance and Reformation, to set them right in the Judgment of God and all good Men; God will be Sanctified in all that come nigh him, and that especially by the most solemn, decent, and reverend Performance of the Offices of his Publick Worship; and this he can never be, by men that are not fully perswaded in their own minds of the goodness and fitness of the mode in which that Worship is performed. For 'tis certain that doubts in this, will hinder such manner of speaking, and such deportment as becomes their approach to God, who is Glorious in Holiness, and Dreadful in Praises; and in that respect also, I think it may well be required, by the Laws of this Church, that every one that is admitted to the Ministry do declare publicly *their Assent and Consent to all and every thing, &c.*

God himself doth require a full perswasion of mind concerning the goodness of what we do (especially in weighty matters;) and tells us that whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin, and he that doubts is damned if he does that he doubts of; and therefore the Church cannot be blamed in this Order: for such Readers were better out of the Church than in it, for they scandalize the Excellent Service thereof, by their slight performance far more than the prophane do; for that they seeming very devout in their Pulpit-Prayers, and so inde-vout in the Common Prayer, people are apt to think the *Common Prayer* not to be the Worship of God, but something to be read on condition to have liberty to Preach, and that it is no matter how it be done if done; and 'tis these men that encourage offensive and indecent behaviour, for many of their hearers though they are present at Prayers, yet never observe any thing that the Rubrick directs to be performed, but sit and loll and stare about, and endeavour, as much as they can, to seem unconcern'd in what is done, till the Minister goes into his Pulpit (for they came to Church only for the sake of what is done there) lest they be thought to approve the Common Prayers: these, I fear, conceit that they do
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well in this, from observing the slightness of such Ministers in Reading the Prayers; or at least it prevents that conviction which such might receive from the devout and reverend performing the same by others; and I believe this, because in those Churches, where the Minister is very devout in Reading the Service, I could never observe any such behaviour; so that either such people seldom come to such Churches (and I think (giving more scandal by their ill Example than they receive benefit by the Service) they were better be absent) or else the power of a *Devout Performance* is such, that they cannot but be inclin'd to imitate it. Therefore if there be any such employed in the Ministry of this Church (as I have cause to fear there are) that Read ill on this account, I earnestly intreat that they will reflect on the indecency and ill consequences of such practices; and (as a Remedy hereof) that they will consult the most learned and judicious (that are devout) of our Church, for fuller Satisfaction in the Reasonableness and Excellency of our Service, that so they may perform it more Reverently and Affectionately, to the Honour of God and the Peoples Edification; and this they will find to be more comfortable to themselves, and

of better acceptance with all good men, than halting between Two Opinions: For it is evident, that if there were any thing sinful in the performance, they ought not to have undertaken it at all (for Evil must not be done that Good may come.) But if there be only a defect of some degrees of Goodness in this Service; then, Reason requires, that they do not make it worse, by an ill performance; but that they do make the best of it for effecting the ends to which it is designed, *viz.* God's Honour, and our Spiritual Consolation. Yet those that Read ill on the account of *such Error*, are more to be pitied and less condemned than those that do so out of a kind of *Carnal Wisdom*; yet such there are; I mean those who are very unwilling to seem Zealous and Devout in that which is condemned by a great Party of Men, because they may (some time or other) be uppermost, and indeed when such men can stand as fair for Preferment for the present as the most devout, and yet have the good Opinion of those in whose power it may be to prefer them hereafter; there may be many temptations of this kind especially among a People consisting of Parties, that bear an equal Balance, and therefore the Consideration of this is not to be despised.

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Men are apt to think they may serve God and Mammon, but it cannot be; 'tis true we may and must become all things to all men that we may win some, but in this they rather win us than we them; (if it may be called a winning, when for fear that a Party may prevail, we are indeavour in what we own for the Worship of God) and indeed we shall never win them from their Errors by such compliance: for the reason of all mankind must agree, that men may not serve their own Carnal Interests to the prejudice of *that Worship whereby God is most eminently Served and Honour'd in the World*: And whilst these men acknowledge our Liturgy to be *such*, none can approve their indeavour performance for fear of being esteemed *High Church Men*, and of losing their Interest in that they call *the Moderate Party*; nor will any of that Party ever be brought from the admiration of the *Ex tempore* Way by such kind of politique Readers: And yet I believe these men do mistake their Interest (I mean even in things Temporal) for the Pious of every Party agree in this, that men should have an hearty Zeal in the Way of Worship they use, and do abhor such men as prefer their own Interest before God's Honour. Now if Times should change,

change, a man, formerly Zealous in the Way of the Church of *England*, if he should see Cause to change with them (as he may sometimes do) would have as kind Reception among such, as those that were afraid to be zealous for fear of offending them, and they would be more apt to glory in bringing one such devout man to their way than in the Conformity of many such luke-warm worshippers. And for those that in all ways of Religion make Gain their Godliness, and only follow Christ for the Loaves and Fishes, they are for shutting out as many as they can (on any pretence) from sharing in the Benefits of their Church-Order, and think *the fewer the better cheer*, they will be sure to exclude from preferment, those that fared well in the times that were ill with them (whether they were zealous in the contrary way or not) by such terms of Communion as they shall very hardly comply with: or if they have a Latitude beyond men's reach in that kind, 'tis ten to one but the want of the fear of God will betray them to some vices that will spoil the comfort of all their worldly enjoyments, and make them less happy than the greatest sufferers for Nonconformity can be: But lastly, if Carnal Wisdom should so discern the inconsistency

consistency of such Vices with this Worldly Happiness, as, on that account they should avoid them, yet the loss of the Endless Joys of Heaven, which such shall never obtain, will detect the folly of this sinful Indifference and carnal Compliances.

I fear these kind of Men will but deride me for all this, and be more hardly persuaded to be truly zealous and devout Readers than either the *Profane* or *Erroneous*, because they have less sense of the things of another Life, and what relates thereunto, than either of them. Concerning the later there is no question, and of the former not much; for *the cares of the World and deceitfulness of Riches*, are named before *the Pleasures of other things*, in *choaking the Heavenly Seed*, (*viz.*) The Doctrine of Eternal Life. For though *Sensual Pleasures* are of another Nature, and have other Objects than Spiritual, and are therefore called *the Pleasures of other things*, and upon that account must needs discompose the Mind and make it unfit to conceive or enjoy the Delights and Pleasure of Communion with God and his Saints in these Holy Exercises, yet because we are many times incapable of such Sensual Pleasures, and satiety oft turns to loathing, (especially for a time) this helps men to see the vanity thereof,

thereof, so that they may be disposed by good counsel at such a time to turn themselves to seek the Pleasures that are always Savory and Lasting, of which we can never surfeit. But now these Lusts of the World (that is Covetousness of Worldly Riches) as they are more insatiable than those of the Flesh, so they have scarce any recesses: they follow us into our Closets, and to Church; accompany us when Sicknes shuts us into our Chambers, and even on our very Death-beds; and nothing but the utter destruction of our Faculties can eradicate this Love of Money: These Lusts give us no time or composure for the Hearty and Zealous Service of God, but tho' our Bodies be present, our Minds being agitated with Thoughts about the World, cannot intend what is done to the Honour of God and their Souls Health as they ought. Therefore Men of this Temper can't be good Readers till they be converted; and their Conversion is very difficult as our Saviour hath taught, *Matth. 19. 24.* There remains therefore, but this Way to make them Read well, That it be for their Worldly Advantage so to do, and that none will employ them except they can approve themselves to Read very well: and this will make them Study it, and it may

may be, Do it as well to the Peoples Edification (though not to their own Acceptance with God) as the most Pious Men. And it is my humble Request, to those who Employ Readers, That they will be sure they do so before they Admit them to the Place, and will not suffer themselves, by any Importunity, Interest, Relation, or any other thing, to be drawn to Accept an ill Reader, to the dishonour of this Service whereby we Glorifie God, and in which we enjoy the Highest and most Heavenly Delights in our own Minds and Spirits, if a good one may be got. But because there may be defect of such, and that they may be forced to accept such as need the Instruction, Incouragement, and good Examples of the Ministers to whom they belong, my Request is farther, That neither their reserving themselves for long and earnest Preaching (which I fear, God will not bless, when set up to the contempt of the Prayers) nor Greatness, nor Studies, nor Business, nor any thing else may hinder them from Reading sometimes themselves, according to that good Order of our Church which they are many ways obliged to observe; and the more obliged, for that they receive a large share of the Dignities and Benefits thereof; I beseech them

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therefore that once a Month at the least; they will most Devoutly and Solemnly Read the Service of the Church in their own Persons, that thereby the Readers may see they have a great love for the same, and be excited to do their Part the better in imitation of their Masters. For certainly nothing will be so prevalent as the Example of those on whom they depend to make Readers more studious and industrious to do their Duty. And to this I also beseech them to add one thing more, as that which will be of great avail to beget a reverence and good esteem for our Prayers in the Minds of the People, and draw them to attend more Constantly and Devoutly upon them; and that is, That the Ministers of the Parishes will never omit (but when constrained thereunto) to be themselves present at the Prayers, when ever they are read in their own Churches: And also that here, in this City, where Churches are very near (in some of which Prayers are read twice a day) that all the Neighbour Ministers will come as often as they can possible, to such Prayers. It hath been a great Grief and Offence to some good Men, as I have heard them complain, that they see so few Ministers at the daily Prayers at St. Christophers, a Church that stands most

most advantageously, to give Example and Influence to the City and Kingdom; where Prayers are read twice every day: and the Example of a devout Attendance and good Performance of Eminent Ministers of our Church in that Place, would for ought I know, Influence the whole Nation unto a greater Reverence for the Publick Worship according to this Order. Others I have heard complain of the Ministers retiring into the Vestry all the time of Divine Service, as if they came to Church to Study and not to Worship, and were not as much concerned in the Common Prayers of the Church as the People. I know not what their Plea may be in this Case, but I have not been able by my own wit to excuse them to those that have blamed them for it: But the worst Complaint of all hath been, That of many Ministers, who at the time of some eminent Lectures, will sit in a Coffee-House, till Prayers be almost done, and rather let their Company be wanting to the Solemnity of God's Holy Worship, than leave a Pipe of Tobacco before it be smok'd out, or not take their usual Dose of Tea or Coffee: I confess I have been much troubled to hear of it, and am more so to mention it, especially thus publickly, if the thing were

were not notorious, and in no way that I know of, I can assist the Reformation of it so well as in this, which I hope will plead my excuse with all good Men.

I know Ministers may be many ways hindred sometimes, from attendance at daily Prayers, and I am against those that are so censorious in imputing their omission to ill causes; no man desires to preserve a greater Reverence and Respect for the Clergy of our Church than my self, but yet I cannot excuse them wholly in this matter, and therefore I humbly beg, that it may not be reckoned any sign of dis-respect that in my Zeal for the Service of God I have proceeded thus far, since I believe the good or ill State of this Church depends much on the Esteem or Contempt that is had of its Publick Service of God, and the Good Order appointed for the same, and upon the Love and Reverence, or Neglect and Contempt of it by its Ministers, which will very much influence the Minds of the People in this matter.

I have but one thing more to beg of them, which I must crave leave to press with some earnestness; which is this,

That in their Sermons they frequently inculcate the Duty of being constant and devout in attending the Common Prayer, and

and that they prove to their People, That it is not only possible, but much more easie, to be devout in the use of Forms of Prayer, than in the *Ex tempore* Way: Methinks when Papists out of a Malicious Design to divide us that they may destroy us, and Separatists out of Mistakes of some Scripture Expressions and an Opinion of Experience, cry up the way of *Ex tempore* Prayer in opposition to the Publick Liturgy, to the distracting Mens minds, and dividing the Church; I say, surely, since it is so, the Ministers of our Church should not think themselves unconcerned about the Esteem their People have of the Common Prayer and their Devotion in the use of it. But since they that are against us on both sides, are so earnest in defending their own ways and reproaching us, the Ministers should not be remiss in counter-working such ill Designs by the most Rational and Convincing Demonstration, joined with Fervency and Importunity of Perswasion in their Preaching on this Subject.

And here I must first observe, That general Exhortations to Piety and Holiness, how Excellently and Passionately soever delivered by our Ministers, tho they may make them admired and followed, and that by
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Men of several Perswasions, yet they will not have the effect such should intend, if Mens minds be corrupted with false Notions, about the exercising and expressing of Piety and Holiness: But as the best Food may do Men hurt by reason of ill Humors in the Stomach; so may such good Doctrine through ill Principles in the Understanding. Such as think the best way to be holy is to Consecrate themselves in the Blood of Heretiques, as the *Papists*, or of such as will not let Christ rule over them, as some *Enthusiasts*; (believing that as the *Levites* were by *Moses* commanded to Consecrate themselves, every Man on his Son and on his Brother that had committed Idolatry in worshipping the *Calf*, so they may Consecrate themselves by this) and such as think the way of Holiness lies in distinction of Words and Phrase, and in their Garb and Garments, or in strictness in some Indifferent and Apocriphal Observances not enjoined by God nor the Church: Nay, if they think it lies in being above Ordinances and rejecting both the Sacraments, in railing against God's Ministers, and censuring all their Neighbours that are not of their Sect, and calling us all Ignoramus's and Persecutors; or, (which is most my Subject) in condemning all Forms

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of Prayer, and all Superiority among Ministers as Popish and Anti-christian, and applauding Independency as the only Scriptural Church-Government, and the *Ex tempore* Way as the only Acceptable Mode of Worship (and that in publick as well as private) I say, all these and whatever other of like kinds (of which there are abundance in the World) when they hear the most Powerful and Passionate Exhortations to Piety in general terms, they make the Application to *Zeal in their own Way*: Wherefore I think those Ministers who believe that in a Sincere and Diligent Improvement of the Order of our Church we may Exercise the most Fervent Devotion towards God, and the most pleasant Communion of Saints in Holy Worship, and also prosecute the Sanctification of our Hearts and Lives, in a way to be prefer'd before all other Ways wherein Men pride themselves: I say, those Ministers that believe this (as all of the Church of England, and especially those concern'd in its Government, I hope, verily do) should not think it enough to preach up Piety in general, but should think themselves obliged to make such particular Application to a Devout and Constant Attendance on the *Common Prayer* as a principal

pal Act of it, as may prevent such abuse of their Sermons by Men of ill Principles, and make them most servicable to the Honour of God and Peace and Welfare of this Church.

If we Observe the Sermons and Books of the Nonconformists on this Subject, it will appear that all their Discourses of Piety have always a secret (and very frequently an open) Relation to the Exercise thereof, in their own way, and very bad Reflections on ours as being but a kind of pagantry and ostentation of Devotion, and meer formality and outside, without that life and power which makes it acceptable to God; and that such Devotion is no evidence that we are truly Regenerate and his Elect People. And this is that which confirms their Disciples in their own way, and hinders them from so much as trying ours. And shall the Ministers of our Church be out-done by those they account Schismatics? Doth not the Ancient Orderly and Solemn Way of our Church deserve as much Zeal as the novel Ways cried up with them? Is not the Honour of God and Salvation of Mens Souls as much concerned in being devout in our way as in theirs? Is not a great love to the *Common Prayer*, a delight to attend constantly on the Offices thereof

thereof and a fervent Devotion therein, as good a sign of true Grace as the love of *Ex tempore Prayer*, and a delight in going frequently to private Meetings? Is not the neglect of God's Worship in our way (especially by those that profess to approve the Order we have for it) a sign of the deadly state of carnal-mindedness and unregenerateness (from which Men must be converted, except they will be damned) and so to be esteemed by us, as well as the neglect thereof in their way. All Men know, that no Way or Mode of Religion is so good that Men should be thought good Christians meerly for being Educated therein, and Professing to approve the same: but such Education and Profession will aggravate their sin if they be not serious in that Way of Religion they approve, and so will the Excellency and Goodness thereof, if they slight it. And should not the Ministers of God (who must bear the blame for ever if God be dishonoured, or Souls damned through their default) Consider this, and perswade Men to a greater love to God and to his Worship in the Way of this Church? And so to order their Concerns with Relation thereunto, that they may approve themselves truly Converted and such as shall be Saved. 'Tis Seriousness

ness in Religion that speaks Men true Christians, and this joined with Constant Attendance on Religious Duties (which is the fruit thereof) is their security against Apostacy of all kinds, and I must say this, that however there may be, and I am confident there are, some of all the different Ways of Religious Worship that are truly Converted and shall be Saved; yet none that I have known are better Christians then they who are Serious and truly Devout in the Way of the Church of England: I know there are many Hypocrites that seem so and are not, amongst us as well as others, but I speak of the Sincere. And if it be so, sure Ministers should think it their Glory and Joy when they can bring Men from a Carnal and Unregenerate State, to that which is truly Spiritual and Gracious. It hath been some grief to me to see that Ministers on both extremes should out-do ours in this matter; those of the *Papists* seem to exult, not only when they can bring one of our Religion over to their Church, but when any of their own turn from a Worldly Secular Life, to that which they call Religious and Spiritual: And the Separatists not onely pretend to leave us upon the account of forsaking the World and devoting themselves

selves to God, but to set up their Meetings on purpose to call others to a more Spiritual Life in communion with them, and rejoice greatly in their success therein; and in nothing do they more glory over us than in out-doing us in Seriousness and Intention in the Matters of Religion, And should we give them cause so to do?

It seems to me, in very deed, there is too great cause of the same Complaint in Christian States (where Men are Christians by their Birth-right) as was in that of the Jews under the Law, *That there is none that understandeth and seeketh after God,* and much more then was in the Apostles times (where Men chose Christianity though accompanied with Reproaches and Persecutions) when yet it is said, That all minded their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ: The Worship and Honour of God and our Saviour, is not so dear to Men as their Secular Advantages. Men do not believe or consider that it is of necessity to their Salvation to love God above all, to do all that ever they do with a greater relation to his Honour than to their own Carnal Advantages; and that the careless neglect of these Holy Offices, when they might order it so as

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to have time to attend them, gives great suspicion they live to themselves and not to God, and are yet but Carnally Minded and in a state of Spiritual Death. Methinks therefore, those who have Care of Mens Souls should be Jealous over them, lest that all their Labour should be in vain, whilst they continue such under their Ministry; and be in Travel, as Women with Child, for their Regeneration. 'Tis certainly a woful sign when Ministers have no greater Concern than to get Money and to make the best of his Livings, and little regard whether his People be pious or profane: God complains heavily of this in many places of Scripture; and it were easie here to declaim against it in many words, if it were not sufficiently done by others, and also so evident in it self, that no Minister that will but think on't, can be ignorant of the great sinfulness of such a Temper; and that the Wrath of GOD, and Curses of the Damned for this their neglect, awaits them in the World to come, and that they are the grief of good Men, and the scorn of bad ones in this World on that very account. They cannot but know that it is they that make Men Separatists, while no Man that hath any Concern for his

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Soul, can indure to live under a Minister that regards the Souls of his People not half so much as he doth the Life of his Beasts: And I wonder they can blame any Man for endeavouring their suspension, since they can be no true Christians, who had rather see so many Souls damned, as may be in danger of it by such Mens neglect, then that they should be displaced by a Just Suspension, that a better may take their Place. For my part, I wish all Parishioners were convinced of their Duty in this kind, and would endeavour all that is possible, in just ways, to remove such Ministers: And those that are most offended at this, should do their duty in this before they think of separating from the Church; and those that have not thought of this, which was the right way to ease their grief) but run into the wrong way of Separation, let them now return at the earliest Invitation of this Church by her best Ministers: and when they have resolved to do their Duty to God, and to the Church, according as the Law requires, let them, in God's Name, see that their Ministers do theirs too, especially in taking care of the Souls of their People, and in performing that the Law of God and the Church requires of them in order thereunto; and

and if, by humble Intreaties, and a pious Example, and by due Attendance for their Reformation, they cannot prevail with them, they ought to complain to the Bishop of the Diocese, to endeavour their Suspension, and that more Faithful ones may be Intrusted by them, with the Cure of their Souls: And it seems a great Argument to perswade all Nonconformists that are truly Pious to return to the Communion of our Church, and to endeavour to approve themselves Devout and Pious in the Offices of God's Worship administered therein, for that by so doing they may be greatly helpful to the Reformation of things amiss, to the Incouraging the good and Removing unworthy Ministers, to the Honour of our Religion, and Salvation of Mens Souls: And I believe there be many Pious Bishops in this Church that would be glad to have such just proof of the Misdemeanors and Neglects of their Clergy, as might inable them to suspend such as deserve it, and put into Employment those that are able and willing to do better, and there are many such to my knowledge, who can have no Employment in the Church, while these naughty Persons, by the favour of careless and profane Patrons, get into good Livings: And

look on it as none of the least mischiefs of Separation, that thereby those that should be Instruments of Reforming the Parochial Churches by Example, Admonition, and assisting the Exercise of Discipline therein, (which cannot take place there through the prevalency of Prophaness, and majority of evil Men) forsake them and leave Ministers and People to perish together, at least for any thing they will do to help to save them. 'Tis not enough for such to rail against ill Ministers and corrupt Communi- ons; for if it be found that through their unjust forsaking the Church to join in Separate Societies, it comes to pass that Pa- rishes cannot be reformed, nor evil Men (Clergy or Laity) be expell'd as they ought, their professed detestation of such will not excuse them, but aggravates their guilt: But this Subject hath been sufficiently Handled by others, I onely thought fit to mention it, that none may think a legal liberty to separate will excuse them from Sin or Schism.

But as I have thus expressed my Dislike of those Ministers that are negligent in a Charge of such Infinite and Eternal Con- cernment; so I cannot but declare my great Respect for such as are Diligent and Faithful: and many such there are (God

be thanked) in this City and Kingdom; however some Nonconformists have reported them so few, that they were next to none.

And I do heartily congratulate the happy success of such Ministers; such, who in Conscience of their *Affent and Consent to the Orders of this Church*, have taken upon them the constant daily Reading of the *Common Prayer* in their Parish-Churches, and that do frequently Administer the Lord's Supper therein; that do not make the backwardness of their People to come to Prayers and the Sacrament, a pretence for their own neglect (when they never tried how forward they would be if they had Opportunity and good Instruction) but set themselves to do their own part (*in waiting on the Ministries to which they are called*) and to perswade the People to do theirs, in a constant and devout Attendance thereon, and to beg God's Blessing on their Endeavours, for their Peoples Edification and Salvation. In this way they have found success beyond their expectation (the numbers of those, that have attended the Prayers and Sacrament, being much greater than what slothful Ministers suggested to be likely;) and the comfort and satisfaction of performing their Duty,

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and their delight in the good success of it as far beyond that of the negligent in their carnal ease and pleasure. And I have great hopes that if others would follow their good Example (especially at this time) it would be a means to restore the Unity, Peace and Glory of this Famous Church, to prevent the Confusions and Troubles we are afraid of, and to establish us on such sure Foundations, that the Gates of Hell, (the Subtily of the Jesuits, and Bandings of all sorts of Fanaticks) shall not be able to destroy us, or alter our well settled Constitution. And I beseech those Ministers, that, by their Pious and Unblameable Lives and Excellent Preaching, have obtained a great Reputation among the People, and a potent Interest in their Affections, that they will now shew themselves hearty Friends to this Church, and be very Devout and Serious in Performing the Offices of God's Publick Worship, according to the Prescription thereof, and Zealous in perswading the People to attend the same, that now when the inforcement of the Laws brings many Dissenters to Church, who formerly never came there, we may shew them the Practice of our Publick Devotion in its own Beauty and Excellency; and this would be more effectual to their

Conversion to the Union and Communion of our Church than any Disputes can be. And I also beseech those Ministers that are most strict Observers of the External Part of the Rubrick, and most Zealous Assertors of the Lawfulness and Excellency of all things in our Church Order, that they will also shew themselves as Zealous Practisers of the Internal Part, *viz.* Of that Devotion that is agreeable thereunto; and lead a Life in other things that may adorn the Order of this Church, and allure Dissenters into the Communion thereof: And I believe this would do much more good than reproaching them with their former Miscarriages, and putting a harsh interpretation on their present Compliances; than exulting in the Execution of the Laws, and using bitter Invectives in Sermons or Discourses, against them. I would not be thought to discourage any in what is truly their Duty, as it may be of our Governours to enforce the Laws of the Land: And I believe, they design onely the bringing the Nonconformists to a sober and serious Consideration of their Duty, and a faithful and impartial Enquiry after satisfaction in such things as they scruple; that we may all Unite in the Solemn Worship of that God who is pleased when

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his House is filled, and bids that Men be constrained to come in ; that we may Live in Christian Charity and keep the Bond of Peace (now much loosened by our different Orders and distinct Commu- nions ;) that we may Join together to Op- pose the Popish Designs (which are much furthered by our Divisions ;) Finally, that we may provoke one another to Love, Honour, and Obey our Superiours, and to Incourage their Government by most ready and free Assistance ; and may lay aside all unjust Suspensions, and froward Opposi- tions, whereby they may be provoked : that so at last there may be no other strife, but whether the Prudence and Sweetness of their Government, or the Humility and Reverence of our Obedience, shall be grea- ter.

And although the Penalties which the Laws inflict on Dissenters seem severe, yet since the Execution thereof is committed to a most Merciful Prince, furnished with the Advice and Counsel of most Pious, Prudent and Moderate Bishops, and by his Prerogative Royal he may make such Re- laxations and Moderations, therein as the Circumstances of Persons and Things re- quire, I cannot think it my Duty (or any Man's else) to discourage any (especially

the Ministers, as now obliged). in presenting such as do not Communicate in our Publick Worship and the Blessed Sacrament. And I cannot but observe this in our Excellent Constitution, That as the Severity of the Laws against those that Factiously Dissent from the Publick Order, and affront the Wisdom of Law-makers, by setting up their Self-chosen Ways against that they prescribe: I say, as this doth secure the Peace of the Kingdom as well as it can be; so their allowing to the King his Prerogative Royal and Supream Headship in Ecclesiastical Affairs, provides better for what Toleration and Connivance is needful towards Peaceable Conscientious Dissenters, than any of the Models in which some Men have taken so great pains to direct the Parliament what Laws to make: But all this on the by.

I know some will think me over Zealous, and that it were better to encourage Ministers in their Compliance with Nonconformists; Connivance at their Meetings and breach of Order and their not coming to the Sacrament; and in their pleasing them by omitting many things in our Service, &c. But although I honour Piety in all, and would please my Neighbour for his good to Edification,
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yet I do not think we are bound to remit any thing of our Duty to God and our Governours for that Reason; neither do I think that Edification lies in being humored in that kind, I am sure the Peace of the Church doth not: Hear what Mr. Baxter writes on this Subject, and I doubt not it will be better taken from him than from me. *Cure*, pag. 392. "The Pastors who will preserve the Churches, must not be so tender of preserving their Interest in the Religious Persons of their Charge (such as are their Parishioners) as to depart from Sober Principles and Ways, (such as those in the Church of England are in our Judgments) to please them, &c. And a little farther, "This pleasing Men is not the Way of Peace, it may prove a Palliate Cure for the present, but prepareth for after Troubles and Confusions. --- for the weakness which crieth up one Error to day may cry up more to morrow (and 'tis so in crying down too) and if you will please them, you must follow them on, except you repent; and then you might at much cheaper rates have forsook them just where they forsook the Way of Truth and Peace. (Such is the observance of the Order of our Church.)

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For though Mens Humours, their Corrupt Affections, and Erroneous Conceits may be gratified hereby; yet their Reason and Conscience is not: When Men consider seriously, that the Minister doth against the Laws and Orders made with greatest Advice of Church and State; against the Publick and Solemn Declaration of his Assent thereunto, and Consent to Practise accordingly; against his Solemn Promise at his Ordination, and also by Subscriptions; and against the Unity and Peace of the Church: I say, when they consider this, they cannot in their Reason and Conscience approve the Omissions, Alterations or Additions which some take liberty to make in the Matters of God's Worship prescribed by the Rubrick. For the violation of such Obligations in Sacred Things (though seemingly small) carries in it the appearance of Contempt of God and his Church: God looks we should be Just and Faithful to our Promises in small things as well as great, and if it were lawful for them to Promise, it is necessary they should be careful to Perform: It is not haste of Business or every kind of avocation that can excuse the curtailing of the Service; nothing, but what a Man may justly think the Church would have al-

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lowed for an excuse (if she had fore-seen it) and dispense with her Laws for, can discharge the Conscience from the Obligation of this Promise at any time.

Therefore if any one, to please his own private fancy, or to gratifie others, leaves out, or puts in, or alters any thing of the Service, I cannot think but he sins against God; and I am sure he gives offence to many that have a Reverence for the Orders of the Church; and scandal to those that have not; and encourages others to reject and disobey them in greater matters. But that which is worst of all, is, that it divides the Ministry and the Church: Some are counted Moderate Men and Friends to *Nonconformists* and *Dissenters*, whilst others (that believe such to be Schismaticks, and that the Church hath given them no cause of displeasure) who strictly observe the Orders of the Church, and seek not so much to please as to bring *Dissenters* to Repentance and a return to their Duty, these are branded as *Popishly Affected Persecutors* and *High Church Men*, and are many ways rendered contemptible to the Vulgar. It seems to me a thing much to be desired, that Ministers would agree to be Uniform in their Practice in these Matters; and that they would all
thoroughly

thoroughly study the Rubrick, and agree together, in what cases they may be excused from the strict observances of such things, which many constantly omit, and others very often; and let the People know it; that we may not think it proceeds from condemning themselves of doing amiss in their promises to observe all and every thing, from differences of Judgment about the Lawfulness of such Things, or the Contempt of Publick Order; and in what cases we may expect it, and in what not: And I think if the Ministers of this City did begin this Agreement, it might give great Satisfaction and good Example to the Country. I have heard some Country Ministers (that are for strict Obedience) complain of the Defects of some Eminent Persons in this City in this matter of following the Directions of the Rubrick, and that they have found by Discourse with them, that it hath been caused through ignorance, in that they never thoroughly Read it. Certainly this is a great Reproach, and should be considered; and since the chief strength of this Church consists in the respect which is given by its Ministers (especially those that should be Examples to the rest) to the Rules and Orders thereof, and their Unity and good Agreement in observing

ving the same, I hope this Advice will not be despised : And I am sure this will make much for the Agreement of the People, who are much distracted and divided by the different Practices (as well as Judgments) of the Conforming Clergy, and they would be more disposed to seek Satisfaction about Conforming to the Orders of the Church, who scruple it, if their Scruples were not too much Justified by these Mens Irregularities ; and they would be a thousand times more like to be Reformed and brought into good Order by the Methods prescribed by the Laws of Church and State, if they had not this to say for themselves, That, those who Prosecute them for breaking the Laws, make but little Conscience of keeping them themselves, or of suffering others (that believe all things good and lawful that are ordered) to walk disorderly ; not observing the Law, but through breaking it, to dishonour the Wisdom of Church and State themselves : whereas they disobey, not out of contempt, but because they fear to dishonour God and offend against the Dictates of their own Consciences, and would swear (as I have heard many say) that it is not to serve any Interest, but out of pure Conscience they Conform not (although
I fear,

I fear, they have not used due ways of satisfaction.) Now it is mighty hard to give a Reason why some should be indulged in a slothful or contemptuous Disobedience, and they punished that disobey out of Conscience. I confess could we say, that these Men prosecute the End of the Law, which is the Edification of the Church, and the Peace and Prosperity of the State, Unity and Charity in each Man's Parish; in which Cases some things at some times, may be dispensed with; (and a Man may be sure the Law-makers meant they should:) or could we say it were like to win the Scrupulous Dissenters, that these Men pass over many things that the Church enjoins, and do some which she allows not, we might say somewhat to purpose to silence this Complaint, but it is hard to prove either, (when so many Worthy Persons of this Church have written so much to the contrary, and Twenty Years Experience disproves it;) therefore the best way to bring Nonconformists to Reverence and Obey the Publick Order, to promote Peace, Amity and Edification, is, For these that are called Conformable Ministers, to take care to observe the Publick Order strictly themselves, and to have frequent Conferences, Personal
and

and by Letters, for the effecting a general Agreement therein: And I most humbly beseech the most Reverend the Arch-Bishops, and Right Reverend Bishops of this Church, to take the Matter into their Serious Thoughts, and consider what Concern they have herein, since the different usages of Ministers in Cathedrals (in Presence of the Bishop himself) gives great offence to some that hold the fore-mentioned Obligation to a Uniformity in all things, and gives greatest strength to the Argument of the Dissenters against their being prosecuted for not observing the Laws.

There is one Thing which the Rubrick most plainly orders, but is generally omitted, (*viz.*) The Administering the Sacrament every Sunday, at the least in Cathedral Churches, and I mention it, because I believe the due performance thereof, and the preparations requisite to the same, would be a great means to reform the Manners of those that officiate in Choirs, of the Officers belonging thereunto, and of the Servants of the Bishops and the Chief of the Clergy; these ought frequently to attend the same (as well as the Priests and Deacons) and may be easily brought to it by the Authority of their Masters (and no doubt

doubt many Devout Persons in the City would come also) and this Solemnity, performed as it ought, I verily believe would be a means to restore much of Primitive Devotion, which the Errors and Disputes of the late Times had almost utterly extinguished; and I believe also that the Zeal and Devotion of the Bishops and chief Ministers of this Church, in thus promoting Piety and Devotion, and endeavouring such a Reformation in the Place of their Residence and among the Officers that depend most on them, would mightily convince the Dissenters of their Sincerity in Religion, and silence their scandalous Reports of them, and induce a greater Reverence and Respect towards them among all the People. And I am apt to think the woful Contempt that is cast on the Clergy by the generality of the People, is permitted by Almighty God as a punishment for the so great neglect of this most Solemn Christian Office in that Place which should be an Example to all others, and would have a great Influence upon them.

I Conclude this Discourse with my hearty Prayer to Almighty God, that he will indue his Ministers with Righteousness, and make his Chosen People Joyful.

I shall

I Shall now add to the People, as I did to the Ministers, an earnest Exhortation, *That they will seriously consider this Matter, and attend the performance of their Duty,* that I may not lose my Labour in directing their Behaviour.

If Men will not dispose themselves to Serious Consideration, we were as good talk to Men asleep, or to the dead; neither God hath made any Promise, or Men can have any hope, that such shall ever be enlightened with the knowledge of the Truth. The most Glorious Light of Spiritual and Eternal Life, *our Blessed Saviour*, even he gives Light to none but *those that will awaken themselves and arise from the dead*; and what can be hoped a Candle should do after the Sun? Men had formerly learnt to talk of Spiritual Drowiness and Death, as if it were bound upon us by such a fatal necessity as must suppose all Exhortations to be vain; but I hope Men have since been better taught; for neither the Sin of our first Parents, nor our own Faults, can so far constitute us Brutes, but that we may (if we will) *show our selves Men*; and in nothing doth it more concern us so to do, than in Things most immediately
rela-

relating to the Honour of God, and our Highest Felicity ; for on this very Account he hath given us more Understanding than the Beasts of the Field, and made us capable of doing him more Honour, and being more happy : There are few Exercises of our Reason about Sensual Pleasures, but have their likeness in the Natural Sagacity and Instincts in Brutes, and in things of that Nature such may serve as well as Reason ; but to consider of God and Invisible Things, and perform Religious Worship in a fit and decent manner, nothing but Reason will serve, and 'tis the Priviledge of Mankind alone, and therein doth our Honour and Felicity chiefly consist. But alas, how do Men close their Eyes and harden their Hearts wilfully, until they provoke God to do it judicially ; and because they would not have the Light of Truth shine into their Minds, nor the Power thereof impress their Souls, God resolves they shall not : Oh woful Condition ! When Men say to God *depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy Ways,* and God saith to Men *depart from me, I know you not you Workers of Iniquity.* And yet as woful as it is, it seems to me that there be but few that dread this. What other sense can be put on the Language of most

most Mens Lives and Conversations, but that they speak them Contemners of God's gracious Presence in the Place where he puts his Name, which he calls his House, placing his Residence there, and owning it for his Dwelling, whence he confers his Blessings and Favours upon us, where we behold the Beauty of his Pleased Face when he lifts up the Light of his Countenance upon us in the Comfortable Promises of his Holy Gospel; where we offer up our selves in Sacrifice unto him and sing his Praises, and powre out our Souls before him in Holy Desires, Humble Complaints, and Hearty Thanksgivings for his Mercy in the performance of these Holy Offices; for thus is God present in the place of Holy Assemblies for his Worship. In this Presence of God, good Christians find a *Fulness of Joy*, and therefore value it above the highest Injoyments of the World: But how few do approve themselves good Christians by this Character? Do not the most among us shew a great dis-regard to our Publick Prayers, and seem not to care whether ever there were any or not? It may be, since Law and Custom even forceth them to recede from Worldly Employments and go to Church on the Lord's Day, they will desire that then they may have

have a good Preacher there that can entertain them with good Language and quaint Notions to please their Ears (while they little regard the Matter of his Sermon, and much less the Solemn Service of our Common Prayers.) But though we have an Order established by Law, *that in every Parish-Church the Morning and Evening Prayers shall be said daily, and a Bell rung a convenient time before they begin, that the People may come hear God's Word and to Pray with him,* yet who, either Ministers or People, regard this?

It grieves me to think, that *Ministers* should here need Excitation, whose chiefest Joy should be to Honour God and to be Examples to their Flocks; Examples I say of Heavenly-mindedness and Delight in God's Service, who therefore because the Law admits an excuse (which yet proves daily Reading *ordinarily*) should not pervert it to a total omission. And for the People (whom I am here writing to) it is not enough for them to go to Church on Sundays, but (if not hindred by Works of Necessity or Mercy) they should attend daily: And a plentiful Estate is desirable chiefly upon this account, yet the Richest and most Leasurely Persons never take care that this Order be observed by Ministers in
their

their Parish - Churches ; and when it is, will scarce ever come there, but make that, which should give them the greatest Advantage and Obligation to come, to be a Hindrance thereunto ; I mean, make use of their Riches, to run themselves into such vast Trades and troublesome Projects, as not to have leasure for God's Service ; or else (if they incline more to pleasure than profit) they take no care to order their Divertisements, that they be no hindrance to the Service of God, but may make them more joyful and zealous therein, tho' this they may and ought to do, they suffer these either to ingross their time, that they never come to Church at all (at least on Week-days) or to exhaust their Vigour, that they are more ready to sleep than pray when they come, and can take no delight in these Spiritual Exercises : Nay, many altogether idle (a thing tedious to Nature) and yet will not divert themselves with going to Church ; these are chiefly of the Female Sex, who being not so subject to be incumbered with Business, and often wanting Company or Pastimes, having nothing else to do ; and yet, tho' they live near Churches where Prayers are daily read, they seldom or never come there : Now what doth this signify,

nific, but that such care not for God, nor his Presence ? let him be gone if he will, and remove the Throne of his Grace and send the Ordinances of his Worship to them that have time and will to attend them, they have other things to do, or had rather be idle than to be at Divine Service seeking his Blessing, owning his Providence, and adoring his Holiness; they hope to do well enough without God, and practically say to him as *Herbert* expresseth it, *We know where we can better be, than to serve thee; or rather, as in the Prophet, We are Lords, we will not come to thee; What is the Almighty, that we should serve him, and what profit shall we have if we call upon him? We desire not the knowledge of his Ways: We will not trouble our heads with Considering how we may best Honour and Please him, give us the Riches, Honours and Pleasures of this World, and take those of the next who will.*

To such as these I would first speak (if it were possible to make them hear) I would but ask them, if they were in the place of Almighty God, Whether they would indure to be so slighted? I know their pride will help here to shew them their own folly, in thinking to escape God's Vengeance whilst they contemn his Worship.

ship. Will he that is God from Everlasting,
 he that gave Being to all Things, and brings
 them to nothing at his own Pleasure! be
 disappointed of the *Honour* for which he
 hath Made and still Governs this World?
 (and that by such a worm as man) and
 not Vindicate the same? Will he not take
 that Glory by his just Punishments, which
 they would not give in the Offices of Di-
 vine Worship? Can the Proudest think to
 resist Omnipotency, or fly from Omnisci-
 ence? Nay, if God should do no more but
 withdraw his Divine Influences, we, and
 all we so love and honour above him, pe-
 rish together: And can we hope God will
 attend us with his gracious Influences,
 who will not attend him with our Prayers
 and Praises? Or shall we say that we believe
 Almighty God takes not this for any af-
 front, but rather esteems the Zeal I here com-
 mend, to be a work of Super-errogation?
 Certainly we shall be of another mind
 when Sickness or Sorrow make us Sober,
 and especially when we approach to Death
 or Judgment: I never knew any that talk-
 ed at this rate, but that at one time or o-
 ther have confessed, that such words came
 not from their Reason or Conscience, but
 from their Pride and Passion; and that they
 were forc'd sometimes to have a secret Re-
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verence for Devout Men, and to Condemn
 themselves for their Neglect of God's Ser-
 vice. There is no Man that consults his
 own Reason, or God's Word, but must
 think God highly values his Honour, and
 that we do him Honour most immediately
 in this way; and if Men be not careful to
honour him in this, they mean it in nothing
 else. That the love of God's Worship hath
 ever been esteemed the first Principle of
 what we truly call Religion; That those
 who are recorded for the most Holy Men
 and Women in Scripture, have been the
 greatest lovers of God's House; and that
 upon this very account, that it was the
 Place where *his Honour dwelt*, and because
 they were enamoured of the Beauty of his
 Infinite Goodness shining there in his Pre-
 mises, desired to be instructed by his Wis-
 dom there appearing in his Laws to be
 assisted and comforted by his Grace exhi-
 bited in his Sacraments, and prepared for
 Heavenly Glory by these Holy Exercises of
 his Worship; this made them love the
 Place where they might see and enjoy him
 to these great purposes. Again, 'tis most
 evident to considering Men, That it was
 the Happiness of the State of Innocency,
 that Man had nothing else to do but to
 Worship and Praise his Maker; (at least

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nothing that might divert him from it.) And that it shall be our chief Happiness in the State of Glory, to be freed from all Cumberfome Labours and Cares, and all Distracting Prosecutions and Carnal Pleasures; and that we shall then continually attend Divine Offices, as that which is our only perfect Bliss and Felicity; and therefore should esteem ourselves the more Happy for having a Recess from Worldly Business now, that we may more freely and frequently attend Divine Offices.

Again, 'tis evident that God who first made all things for himself, created again his Church and People, *that they might be to the praise of the Glory of his Grace, Eph. 1.* And all Christian Assemblies are so constituted and Holy Offices appointed therein, that they may be so; therefore for Men to call themselves Christians and Members of such Assemblies, and yet despise Publick Worship, is a great Affront to God and to the Church, which hath well appointed these Daily Offices of Divine Worship, as being agreeable to Reason, to the Divine Prescriptions, and to the Customs of the wisest of Mankind, and requires our Attendance upon them when ever we can redeem time from the Business that is necessary to our Maintenance, and the Recrea-

tions that are necessary for our Health, both which are allow'd in most cases for our excuse; and those that will think of more, I believe will find themselves mistaken at the Day of Judgment.

These Things, and much more that might be said of like nature, being so evident, I must believe these kind of Men, that think our Daily Attendance at Prayers is being Righteous over much, are not moved hereunto by any thing of Reason or Sober Consideration; but are wholly influenced by Pride or Covetousness, or other Carnal Affections, which hinder the Exercise of their Rational Faculties, and make them live more of the Animal than the Divine Life, (*i. e.*) more like Beasts than Men; and so long as they are such, we must expect no other Language from them; for the Carnal Mind (a Man that discourseth as a meer Animal) perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned; and therefore it will be in vain for me to say any more to them, then earnestly to desire them, *To pluck out the Beam that is in their own Eye, and then shall they see clearly to pluck out the Mote that is in their Brothers:* For an Extream in this matter, (if any man be supposed to be guilty

ty. thereof) is no more, in comparison of their total Neglect and Contempt of God and his Publick Worship, than a *Mote* to a *Beam*, as they will find at the last.

The Second Sort to whom I shall apply my self, and for whose sake I chiefly undertook this Work, is such as have a love for these Holy Offices and daily frequent them ; to whom my earnest Request is, That they will persist in the good way they have begun, attend to the best manner of performance, and make all the rest of their Lives answer to their Devotion herein. I doubt not but such who do understand the Grounds and Reasons upon which our Publick Service was first ordered, and have taken up this practice, in a sense of their Duty to God and Man, will easily and effectually comply with my Desire, and save me the Labour of Arguments. I shall only say, the Inward Peace and Satisfaction they will find in governing themselves in this Matter, by Reason and not by Fancy, and in following the Custom and Usage of all good Christians for many Ages, and of most even in this, (and not that of Hereticks and Schismatics) by obeying the Orders of our own Church, made with the greatest Advice and by the most unbiased Persons of any in the World ; and

not Herding with Quakers, Fifth-Monarchy men, Anabaptists, and other turbulent Sects, that oppose the same and seek its Ruin; the Satisfaction they will have in finding all that was Good and Profitable, all that was Decent and Solemn, all that was truly Primitive or any way Praiseworthy in the Service of the Church of *Rome* (a Church which was once very Famous for Learning, Piety, and Stedfastness in the Faith) still retained in ours; and all that which Ignorance, Error, or the Corruption of Times had introduced into that, purged out in this: I say, the Satisfaction they will find in considering the Excellency of our Form of Divine Service, in this and such like respects, *Will prevent all Inclinations to turn into other Ways.*

And should they have any Scruples suggested unto them by cunning Seducers, I dare say, if they will but do (what may be justly expected from Men so educated and obliged,) that is, Consult the Ministers of our Church, they will find the fullest satisfaction that they can desire.

Again, As these Considerations, so the good Effects of a Devout Attending this Service, will perswade them to continue the same: The Exaltation of our Minds, thereby, above the mean Concerns of this World,

World, so that they shall not be influenced by the Revolutions and infinite Changes to which it is subject; the Confirmation of our Faith and Hope in God's Promises, and the inward Joy and Peace that results therefrom; the Excitation of our Love to God, and the Exercising thereof in Holy Adorations and Cheerful Praises; the Increase of our Love to one another by Holy Communion in such Sacred Offices: these and such like, which will be the Effects of attending this Service, will inforce our delight therein, and our endeavours, so to order it, that we be not kept from the same. To which I may add some outward good Effects, such as, 1. The Preventing many Idle, and, sometimes, very Chargeable Clubs and Visits, from which this will both excuse and oblige us. 2. The inducing Harmony and Good Order into our Families: For our contriving that as many as possible may attend God's Service, will make much for Order in other things, and also for Love and Peace and Good Success of our Affairs. I cannot attend the Demonstration, but I am sure he that will try, shall find it true by Experience. 3. The Chearfulness induced into our Minds by our Communion in the Psalmody and Responses, and the use of our Voice in other parts of the Service,

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tends much to the health of our Bodies and the mending our Temper: For as silence feeds the Melancholy Humour (the worst that Mans Body is affected with, and of most pernicious Influence on the Mind) so Speaking, and especially in such Heavenly Converse, doth much to dissolve and disperse the same, and preserves the Body healthful, and lively, and the Mind in a sweet and pleasant Temper. I shall mention no more, I hope it may suffice to have touched these things in so short a Discourse to perswade a Constant Attendance on the Publick Prayers.

2dly. I shall say somewhat also to perswade an indeavour of a right performance, which even those are in danger not to do who daily frequent these Holy Offices. Education, Custom, and various Interests may have great force to effect a constant attendance at Prayers, when yet want of consideration may betray Men to Formality and undue Performance. There is a *Fear of God* (so his Worship of old was called,) *which is taught by the Precepts of Men*, Matth. 15. 8. and this is when Men go to Church meerly because the Magistrate Commands, or their Parents bred them to it, or because it is the Custom of their Neighbours so to do: These shew themselves of a good dactile and

and sociable Temper, and are more to be esteemed than such, who, in despite of the Laws, good Education, and a pious Cohabitation, contemn and scorn a daily attendance on God's Worship: Or than those that strain their Wits to find Faults in our Liturgy, and that do all they can to create Scruples in themselves and infuse them into others. But they must not rest here, but while they constantly go to Prayers, they must endeavour to exercise that Fervent Love to God and to our Blessed Saviour, and that Divine Joy in the Hope of Glory to come, and to Fore-taste the Blessedness we shall partake of in the Communion of Saints above in these Exercises, wherein (as Saints) we have communion here below, and will, to that purpose, attend more diligently to the Preparations wherewith they should come to Worship, and to those Expressions whereby they Honour God while they do so.

Therefore I beseech these to whom I write to consider, *that God will be Sanctified in all those that come nigh to Worship him*; and this he only is by those who *Worship him with a Holy Worship*, both Internally and Externally: Which we do not, except our Minds be so disposed, and our Words and Actions so ordered, as is aforesaid, and

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as becomes the Glory of God's Essence, the Immenfity of his Divine Perfections, the Sense of our own Concernments and of our Relation to those we are to pray with, and to pray for ; and fo as is fuitable to the feveral Parts of Worſhip which we are to perform. Now theſe Diſpoſitions cannot be attained but by ſerious and frequent Meditation : For there is a Connexion in the Duties of Religion, which make it impoſſible to perform ſome as we ought, except we make Conſcience of others that are preparatory thereunto ; in this Connexion I ſuppoſe *Meditation* to be the firſt, and he that makes no Conſcience of that, or knows not how to Perform it, will be hardly brought to a Good Performance in any other Duties, eſpecially this of Prayer. Men may by a natural fluency of Speech, aſſiſted with a quickneſs of Wit and ready Invention, eaſily pray to good acceptance with Men : but as to our acceptance with God, and the effects of Prayer to our own Benefit and Conſolation, it depends on the preparation of ſuch Affections, and ſuch Expreſſions thereof, as can never be without frequent *Meditation*.

Meditation in the moſt common ſenſe of the word, is taken for more than bare thinking ; It is a *thinking of things, that we may have*

have such knowledge of them, and esteem and affection toward them as we ought to have : And so great an Influence hath the proposed End into the Efficacy of any Action, that I cannot expect that any Man should excite his Devotion by thinking of things though never so Divine, except he designs by such thinking so to do : Students of several sorts are engaged to think of such things as would serve to this and other excellent Ends, but without any Effect. The Reason is, because their Minds by being so intently fixed on the love of Carnal Pleasures, do not discern even the things they look full upon, nor understand those very things they teach to others ; and altho' they are constrained to think how they may talk or write of such things, yet they are with-held by these Sensual Affections from considering the Concern which themselves have therein.

There is no way therefore by meditating, to attain Devotion or any Vertue, but by crucifying the Flesh, with all its Affections and Lusts, and awakening our dead and drouzy Souls to design and endeavour to live that Life for which they were made, and in which alone they can be made happy : And to this our Blessed Saviour hath given us such Assistance by the Grace of the Gospel,

spel, that no Man that will take hold of it can complain of infirmity ; for altho' we never so much feel the weight of earthly things which press down the Soul, as when we strive to ascend to God In the Exercises of Devotion, yet if we fix our Minds on him who was God manifested in the Flesh, shewing us how little these things are (how great soever they seem ;) how little to be desired or feared, tho' seemingly dreadful or pleasant, by his refusing all the Glories we so eagerly prosecute, and accepting the Sufferings we so fear and fly ; and would contemplate the Heavenly Joys which he offereth us, on condition we will receive his Spirit, and lead our Lives after the Pattern he hath set us ; I say, if we would thus *look unto Jesus, (the Author and Finisher of our Faith)* we should soon find ourselves able to *lay aside these Weights (how easily soever they beset us)* and to ascend to him in Holy and Devout Affections, while we are employed in these Sacred Offices.

But it is not so much the want of Ability, as of Intention, that is cause of the Decay of Devotion, as I said before, and therefore to awaken that I would represent the Excellency of this Heavenly Affection.

Devotion it is a most Divine Spirit in Man, his greatest Exaltation above Beasts, and

and his nearest Approach to Angels; 'tis (as *Herbert* saith of the Sabbath) the Fruit of this World and the Blossom of the next, the highest enjoyment which we are capable of here, and the fore-taste of what we shall most fully enjoy hereafter. It transforms the Soul into a Seraphim, burning with the Fervours of Divine Love, carrying it to Heaven (as *Elias*) in a Fiery Charriot to take its place in the Choir of Angels, and joyn in their Halalujahs, and Adorations of him that sits on the Throne, and of the Lamb that is at his Right Hand. But yet it carries us not above any of the Concerns wherein we may be useful to Men, but descends to the Consideration of all their Wants and Necessities, Sorrows and Miseries, taking them into its Breast, and presenting them before God, with earnest request for comfort and relief in them all; yea, it begets in Men such a Divine Charity as reacheth to the uttermost of what may be done for the Well-fare and Happiness of their Neighbours. For while we Adore God, who is the Supream Benefactor, and our Saviour, (God-Man) the Example of Self-denial and Meekness, (Virtues that Cure our Hurtful Lusts) and such a lover of Men as to prosecute their Salvation and Felicity, with the shedding of his
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most Precious Blood. I say, while this is the Object of our Adoration, as it is in these Exercises of Devotion, how can it be otherwise but that it must beget in us a Life and Temper most pleasant and profitable to Mankind? And indeed I have observed, that this *Heavenly Flame of True Devotion* is like that which descended on *Elias's* Altar, it licks up all our opposite Interests (as that did the Water) and makes both ourselves and all we have, a Sacrifice to the Honour of God and Good of Mankind: None therefore that considers the Excellency of Devotion, but would set himself with great attention of Mind, to the Consideration of such Things as may render him a Devout Man.

The Things that are of this Nature are principally such as relate to God, to Ourselves, or to Others we are to Pray for. We should think upon God, That he is worthy all our Adorations and Praises, for his Glorious and Infinite Perfections, his Wonderful Works, and for his Innumerable Blessings and Mercies: That he, and *he only, beareth Prayers, and is nigh to all that call upon him*, and is pleased when Invoked for the things he is willing to give us: That he alone Orders and Disposeth all the Affairs of this World, according to his Sovereign Will and Pleasure; Re-
strains

strains or Inlarges the Powers of Nature ; Stops or Diverts the Course of it ; Overrules Second Causes ; Prospers or Disappoints Human Undertakings ; Gives and Takes away ; Lifts up and Casts down, even how and whom he pleaseth.

We should think of our Dependance on him, That we Live, Move, and have our Being in him, and cannot Subsist a moment without him ; that we are subject to innumerable Casualties, which may destroy the strongest Body and healthfullest Constitution ; and to such Vexations as will sour the sweetest Temper, and to such Amazement as will shake the most fixed and composed Mind, which he only can prevent from befalling us, (as being under his Divine Government) and can by his immediate Influxes Comfort us when they do so. We should think how many things we want ; what woful things we are in danger of ; of our manifold Temptations, by allurements of sensual Objects, and suggestions of evil Spirits ; of the weakness of our Graces and insufficiency of all things in Heaven or Earth besides God for our Supply and Succour : And if we would think seriously of these things, we should find great help to Devotion in Prayers thereby ; we shall find how much we are

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concerned to reconcile ourselves to God by humble and penitent Confessions, to seek his Grace and Favour by Fervent Supplications, to pray for the Aid of his Spirit to help our Infirmary, and to assist our Victory over our Spiritual Enemies; and to give him thanks that we have not fallen into greater Sins and Miseries; to attend to his Holy Word, that thereby we may receive Grace from him, to learn to please him and oblige his care and kindness for us, and these things will beget and excite Devout Affections in us.

It will be profitable also to this End, to think of our Obligation to our Christian Brethren, and of the Particular Regards we ought to have towards all Sorts and Degrees among them: For we Pray, as Members of the Catholick Church; and must have a Concern for all Christians as Fellow-Members of one Spiritual Incorporation. But particularly, we should often think what Affection we should bear to those, whether our Superiors, Equals, or Inferiors, with whom we are united, as one Nation and National Church, and also should endeavour to represent to ourselves what may be the several States and Conditions of those we are presently to joyn with, in the performance of Sacred Offices: Such Considerations

siderations will much help our Devotion ;
 for the sense of the sins of others to whom
 we are united (as well as of our own) will
 help to make us humble and contrite in our
 Confessions ; the sense of their Wants and
 Miseries will help to make us fervent in
 our Supplications ; the sense of the Mercies
 they receive, will help to make us joyful in
 God's Praises , because we are obliged by
 our Union to reckon their Sins, their Wants
 and their Mercies our own. Thus the ge-
 neral knowledge that multitudes of Chri-
 stians, as well as our selves, are concern-
 ed in the Matter of our Prayers, and the
 sense we have, in particular, of the Con-
 cern of many of those we presently joyn
 with, will add much more to our De-
 votion. It may be there are many things
 in the Publick Prayers that we have not
 at present such a particular Concernment
 in, but, when we think there are Millions
 of Christians that have, who are all of the
 same Divine Incorporation, and that many
 of them are our own Country-men united
 with us , as a National Church , and
 some our Neighbours, with whom we are
 one, as a Parochial Church, and of whose
 Concern we may have a particular know-
 ledge. I say, this Meditation will greatly
 assist our Devotions, and will also increase
 that

that Charity, without which our Prayers as well as Ourselves are counted but dead in the sight of God : And when we have wrought Ourselves to this excellent Temper, our love to our Brethren will help our Devotion another way also. For it will make us endeavour, by our example, to make them Devout ; and the more defective we do perceive their Devotion to be, the more shall we endeavour to assist it, by the perfection of our own. And there is certainly no better way ; for I have known those that Reproof and Disputation did but irritate, by such Examples to have been reformed.

Lastly, Frequent Reading these Holy Offices by ourselves, and serious Meditation thereon, would be a great help to our Devotion, (and *Dr. Comber's Excellent Book on the several Offices of the Common Prayer*, will much assist us therein ;) for when we have a full understanding of the great things contained in the brief comprehensive Sentences of the *Lord's Prayer* and of our *Collects*, &c. the memory thereof, when we come to repeat them, will much assist our Devotion : And I am perswaded, that if Men were but conversant in the study of the *Common Prayer-Book*, they would find more Instruction in the Matter of their Duty

Duty to God and Man ; more Assistance in governing their Affections and Passions and preserving Peace in themselves ; more Support and Consolation in Troubles and Afflictions ; and more Aid against Temptations, &c. than in reading many Books ; but especially it would be an excellent Means to increase those Holy Affections which prepare us for Publick Prayers, and to assist our Devotion in the Performance.

I have mentioned this little of a great deal that might be said, of the Matter of our Meditation : but still it must be remembered, that these things be thought on with a purpose and intention to beget in us such *habitual Affections and Dispositions*, that we may be always fit to Pray : and may in the most wonted Expressions, exercise a fervent Devotion : and if we do so, we shall not so need the Natural or Artificial Rethorick in Prayer as those do that want these Dispositions ; nor shall we be cloy'd with having Prayers always the same ; as some Dainty Stomachs are with eating often the same Meats ; for such Men constantly carry in their Breast such a sense of their past Enormities, that it puts Life into their repeating our *General Confession* ; and such Esteem of God's Mercy in Christ, as gives them a Behaviour, not ordinary,

dinary, in receiving Absolution ; they have such Affection towards the Glory and Pleasure of Almighty God, and such belief that he only can give what we want, and forgive the Sins, and prevent the Temptations that would involve us in evil, now in this World, and eternally in the next : that it gives a great Devotion to their saying the *Lord's Prayer* ; and all the rest tho' they are still the same.

And where Men have such sense, methinks no Man should deny that they pray in the Spirit or in the Holy Ghost, as the Precepts of the Gospel require : That Pious Nonconformist, Mr. *J. Corbet*, in his *Kingdom of God*, hath these words, *The Spirit of Prayer is never wanting, where the Heart hath a due sense of the Matter* : pag. 46. *Although* (as he afterwards explains it,) *we use a stinted Form of Words*. Dr. *Owen* I confess, in a late Discourse of Prayer, hath these words ; *If Persons are able, in the reading any Book, meerly of Human Composition, to rise up in answer to this Duty of Praying with all manner of Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, or the exercise of the Aids and Assistances received from him and his Holy Acting in them as a Spirit of Grace and Supplication, endeavouring, labouring and watching thereunto ; they have attained what*

I cannot understand. That is in plain words, the Doctor cannot understand how a Man, that uses a Form, can be said to pray in the Spirit: It would be a high presumption in me to question the Understanding of so Great a Man; but he will not be angry if I question my own: for I cannot understand, why our Saviour (from whom we have these Precepts of Praying in the Spirit) should teach his Disciples a Form of Prayer, if in using a Form we cannot pray in the Spirit. But it may be the Doctor will say (as he doth insinuate in many places of that Book,) that Christ gave those words only for a Doctrinal and Directive Help to Prayer, (*i. e.*) To teach Men how to pray *Ex tempore* ~~for~~ *for which End* (he saith) we may read Forms of Prayer (how unlawful soever the use be, for which they were made.) But then I do not understand how the Doctor can say, pag. 234. *That it were better (it may be) that this were done: (Men taught to pray Ex tempore) in some other way, and these Doctrinal and Directive Helps not cast into the Form of a Prayer, which is apt to divert the Mind from its proper End and Use.* Which words seem to me, to have such a Reflection on our Blessed Saviour as is little short of Blasphemy; (according to the Doctor's Opinion

pinion of the *Lord's Prayer* :) For if that were not intended for a Form, but for a *Doctrinal and Directive Help to Prayer* ; then those words applied to him, plainly say, *That it may be, Christ might have done better, than to have cast his Instructions and Directions about Prayer into the Form of a Prayer, which is apt to divert the Mind from its proper End and Use* : which to say, is to reproach the *Wisdom of God-incarnate*, and to tell Our great Teacher, *sent from God*, that he did not understand his Office, nor teach, in the best manner, a thing of greatest concern to the Glory of God, and Happiness of Mankind (as the Doctor rightly saith, the well performance of Prayer is.) Words, which no Christian can patiently hear of his Saviour. Now, according to my weak opinion, there is but one of these two ways for the Doctor to avoid this consequence from his words, either that he confess the truth and say, That our Saviour intended to teach his Disciples a Form of Prayer, and that it is not only Lawful, but a Positive Duty to use this his Holy Prayer as we do. Or, if he will hold to this Opinion, *viz.* That 'tis a Doctrinal and Directive Help to teach to Pray *Ex tempore* ; Then he must prove, that it is not cast into the Form of a Prayer. Now this later seems utterly

utterly impossible to be done; for since it so plainly appears, that it is *cast into the Form of a Prayer*. And since the Christians of many Ages throughout the World, have esteemed and used it as a Form of Prayer. And since the *Doct̃or* himself (notwithstanding his Opinion that it was not so intended) cannot forbear in many places of his Book to call it *The Lord's Prayer*. I say, since it is so, he will never make Men believe it is not cast into the Form of a Prayer: Therefore I hope the *Doct̃or* on second thoughts will retract his Book, and confess that there is a Work of the Spirit in Prayer that he hath therein much opposed. A Work wherein he moved our Saviour and Holy Men to compose *Forms* of Prayer, and to teach their Disciples to say them, as the best Help to Prayer. A Work whereby he moved and inabled our Reformers (as well as the Governours of other Churches) to Compose and Prescribe a *Liturgy* or Form for the Publick Service of God. A Work whereby he excites Men to approach daily to God in this Solemn Office of Prayer in the Church, and not to think it enough to Pray occasionally, when they are pressed with the present sense of Dangers, Miseries, or Wants,) as I confess every Christian can and may do in his Closet,

set, *Ex tempore*. A Work whereby he teacheth Men thankfully to accept, and faithfully to use as Prayers, the Form our Saviour taught; and other Forms taught and prescribed as before. Lastly, A Work whereby he teacheth, and assists, the Preparations I before mentioned; that in the use of such Forms we may be truly devout and fervent. And if the *Doctōr* will believe and consider this, I hope he will use no more such Insinuations to perswade that no Forms of Prayer should ever hereafter be made; nor those that are, be used any otherwise than to help the attainment of the Art of Praying *Ex tempore*: nor will (while he professeth to oppose our Liturgy, as set up to exclude their Way of Praying) endeavour by such Insinuations to banish our Way of Praying out of the World (as the use of *Ex tempore* Prayer did once the Liturgy out of the Church). And I hope the *Doctōr* will excuse this warmth, which the conceit of such a design hath occasioned. But (to return) if our Saviour meant to teach a Form of Prayer, there can be no greater proof than that, That in the use of Forms we may best pray in the Spirit. For since by his Inspiration the Precept of Praying in the Spirit was given, the Way of Prayer he taught, must be acknowledged best

best for the performing the same. This I hope, will put an end to the common way of appropriating the phrase of *Praying in the Spirit*, to the use of *Ex tempore* Prayer, and give those, that pray by Forms, and by our Liturgy, some share in the honour of it; and then I hope we shall hear no more Scoffing at Praying by the Spirit (which this appropriation hath caused, however the Doctor complains of it) which I by no means approve.

But Lastly, When we have done our best in our Preparations and Performances, we must take heed that all be not intended to gain an Indulgence for living in any Sin, either of Omission or Commission.

The Enemies of our Church boast much of their good Lives; and condemn us, that are for the *Common Prayer*, as a profane sort of Men: I do heartily wish them as good as they think themselves, and that their goodness may consist as much in the Government of their Passions, in Just Retributions, in Meekness, Humility and Candid Interpretations, as in decrying Sensual Vices and Worldly Poms and Vanities: And I wish also, that ours did not give just occasion for this their complaint; and that we may endeavour to Equal (yea Excel them in Temperance and Heavenly-minded-

ness; adding Sobriety and True Sanctity to Conformity and Loyalty. But that I may also to my Wishes add my Faithful Endeavours, I shall offer Two Considerations to perswade thereunto, 1. That, of the Incongruity of a Vicious Life to dally Attendance on Divine Service and appearing Devout therein : 2. Of the Unacceptableness thereof without the Conjunction of a Holy Life.

1. The Incongruity is Evident to all Men. None that see a Man to go constantly to Church, to bow very low at his coming in, to appear very devout in the several Parts of Worship, both by Speech and Behaviour; I say, they that see this, expect that such a one should be very exact in the Course of his Life : And if they come to know, that they are not, they will be very apt to take offence at it : I confess, for my own part, it hath been so with me, and others have told me it hath been so with them, and reason tells me it must be so with all : For it is absurd to hear a Man at Church very devoutly to own himself a sinner, and condemn himself of silliness in wandring from God's Ways and following his own Desires and Devices, (as in our *General Confession*) and then return home as Proud and Self-concelted as ever, and ne-
ver

ver the less inclin'd to wander from God in
 prosecution of Self satisfaction as before.
 To call God our Father at Church, as if
 we did partake of a Nature like his, incli-
 ned to all Righteousness, Goodness and
 Truth, and when we come Home (by our
 Ill Nature and Destructive Practices) to
 shew ourselves the Children of the Devil.
 To call him, *Our Father in Heaven*: when
 neither the consideration of the Heavenly
 Original of our Souls, generated first by
 Divine Spiration, and regenerated by that
 Word which is of Divine Inspiration (on
 both which accounts we call him *our Fa-
 ther*) can raise our Minds from this Dung-
 hill Earth, to seek the Things above: Nor
 the Heighth and Excellency of God's Glo-
 ry, and his Advantage of Seeing and Pu-
 nishing (expressed by his *being in Heaven*,)
 can move us to fear him. To Pray, that
his Name may be Hallowed; and then Pro-
 fane it ourselves, (by using it in vain and
 light Interjections, or by Oaths and Exe-
 crations in our common talk) and causing
 it to be profaned by others, through our
 vicious and scandalous Lives. *That his
 Kingdom may come*; and yet rise in Rebel-
 lion against the Holy Government of his
 Spirit in our Hearts; and against the Di-
 sposals of his Providences, as to our out-

ward Estate: And to affront his Ministers, either Ecclesiastical or Civil, and discourage them in their Administrations, by our Crossness, Frowardness and Disobedience. To Pray, *That his Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven*, when yet our Obedience is so dull and heavy, and as it were constrained by necessity, and so very unlike the Angels, who in doing the Will of God, fly with all alacrity; all this is very absurd and incongruous. I may add the Indecency of our Grumbling if we are not as Rich as our Neighbours, and our Discontent at Losses and Crosses, though we have more than enough left; when yet we pray *but for our daily Bread*: Our Implacableness and Irreconcilableness towards those that offend us, when we pray *to be forgiven no otherwise than as we forgive*: And lastly, that when we pray *that God will not lead us into Temptations*, we do so heedlessly or presumptuously run into them; I say, so run into Temptations, that without a Miracle God himself cannot deliver us from evil, when we may be sure he will work no Miracle, in favour of such, as offer themselves as a prey to Satan, by their running into Temptation, and neglecting the Means of their own Preservation.

I hint these things from the beginning
of

of our Service, that we may see the incongruity of a wicked Life with the whole.

2dly. The Unacceptableness of all Expressions of Devotion, from Men of such vicious and profane Lives. *The sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord, 'tis the prayer of the righteous that is his delight. Unto the wicked saith God, What hast thou to do to take my Name into thy mouth, since thou hatest to be reformed, and casteth my words behind thee?* The most Solemn Assemblies of such Men for his Worship and Service is a burden to him; *Isa. 1.* the reason is, because his infinite Veracity makes him to hate their Hypocrisie, his just Resentments of their bold breaking his Laws, when ever the Devil and their Lusts tempt them to it, makes his Displeasure to arise at their Fawning when these are satisfied. To give real Worship to Satan by doing his Lusts, and to live to the Flesh, by fulfilling its Desires, and then to make these outward Appearances of great Devotion towards God, makes his Jealousies burn like that of an abused Husband, when his Wife fawns on him after her Adulterous Embraces. 'Tis our Hearts that are God's Peculiar, and if we suffer any thing to ravish or defile them, *the sacrifices of our lips will not be accepted.*

But

But now how excellently doth *Holiness* and *Righteousness* sute together? and how graciously doth God accept such in whom they are conjoynd? To see a Man that makes acknowledgment of a most Glorious and Trimendous Deity by Solemn Acts of Worship in the Morning; *Walking in the Fear of God all the Day long*. To see a Man after he hath Celebrated God's Glorious Perfections (Wisdom, Goodness, Truth, Faithfulness, Patience, Long-suffering and Forgiveness, &c.) in the Solemn Office of Thanksgiving, striving to imitate them in the Course of his Life. To see a Man after the Cup of Blessing received at the hands of God's Ministers with great Devotion, to declare, by his Conversation, that he hath thereby been made to drink into the same Spirit with his Saviour: That he is Lowly, Meek, and Patient; Loving, and Diligent in doing others good; a Contemner of things below, earnestly seeking those above, as Christ was: I say, to see this is most lovely, because these things do so excellently agree. And such Men in whom these are united, are most acceptable in their approaches to God; he is well pleased with their Adorations and Praises, delights to hear their Prayers, and will shew such tokens for their good, *that they may always see to their joy,*
and

and their enemies oft to their shame. And I am perswaded if the People of this Church will join these Two Things in their constant Practice, God will so Bless us, that all the Ends of the Earth shall Fear him; (*i.e.*) be allured by the Flourishing Glory of our Church and State, to Imitate the Excellent Order of our Divine Service.

And if they would but consider what good effects this would have (to the healing our Breaches and restoring us to Love and Unity among ourselves, making us a Joy to our Friends, and a Terror to our Enemies abroad, and preventing the Miseries we lately felt and presently fear at home) and will not suffer themselves to be blinded by Passion and Prejudice, and the ill Arts of discontented Men; I say, they could not chuse but put their helping hand to effect the conjunction.

I conclude therefore, with my Earnest Prayer to Almighty God for the good Success of this Book, affectionately designed to perswade Men to a Decent Performance of Holy Offices, and to Exemplary Piety in all their Converses, That, by his Blessing, notwithstanding all its defects, it may fully attain its End; and to this Prayer I hope all Good Men will say, *Amen.*

F I N I S.

Imprimatur,

GEO. ROTSE, R. R^{mo} in Christo
Patri ac Dom. Dom. Johanni Ar-
chiep. Cantuar. à Sacris.

Aug. 10. 1691.

E R R A T A.

Page 3. line 2. for *servous*, read *serious*. p. 68.
l. 12. after *same*, add *with*. p. 81. l. 24. after *to*, add
much. p. 98. l. 30. for *their*, r. *our*. *ibid.* l. 21. for
they, r. *we*. p. 131. l. 21. after *many*, add *are*.

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